City-to-city co-operation and the realisation of urban sustainability

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CITY-TO-CITY CO-OPERATION AND THE REALISATION OF URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract

This thesis examines the extent and the nature of city-to-city co-operation (CTCC) for sustainable development among UK local authorities. Policy-makers and analysts believe that various forms of local authority co-operation, here termed CTCC, will enable local authorities to effectively deliver local sustainable development objectives. To date, little attention has been given as to why and how such governing processes take place or to the realities of their outcomes. The thesis informs academic debates on governance. It argues that the 'hollowing out' (Rhodes, 1997, p. 138) and changing role of the state (MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999) have allowed for the emergence and diffusion of self-organizational networks. This shift in the nature of governance has created the political opportunity for CTCC. The thesis draws on the policy networks (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992) and governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) literature to consider how key characteristics in governing through networks – resources, face-to-face interaction, and inter-personal relationships and trust – are relevant to CTCC. In turn, the thesis argues that hierarchy and meta-governance, often neglected in discussions of self-organising networks, have important roles in shaping governing processes. The thesis has developed a three-fold typology for understanding the nature and implications of CTCC.

Three main methods were employed in the research: the use of an empirical survey to 100 local authorities within the UK; semi-structured interviews, and documents analysis within the context of four UK-based local authority case studies. Two of the case studies examined the policy area of climate change adaptation; and the other two explored community planning. The findings suggest that CTCC is widespread transnationally and domestically. Links between local authority institutions can be virtual – e.g. browsing of websites, on-line policy documents, e-mails, telephoning – which is generally excluded from the governance literature, but is becoming increasingly important for policy learning as practitioners see this to be cost and time effective. Interestingly, central government considers face-to-face engagement and identified 'best practice' through mandatory benchmarking practices between local authorities as key to learning. The implications for the quality of learning through virtual and physical interaction are discussed. The research is an ESRC collaborative (CASE) project with the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF).

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABI	Association of British Insurers
BSHF	Building and Social Housing Foundation
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CASE	Co-operative Awards in Science and Engineering
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CEM	Council of European Municipalities
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
CLG	Communities and Local Government
COE	Council of Europe
COSLA	Convention of Scottish local authorities
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CTCC	City-to-City Co-operation
DETR	Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EEDA	East of England Regional Development Agency
EERA	East of England Regional Assembly
ESCTC	European Sustainable Cities and Town Campaign
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
ESTAC	Energy Savings Trust Anglia
EU	European Union
FTAP	Floor Target Action Plan
GONE	Government Office of the North East
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency

IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LA 21	Local Agenda 21
LAA	Local Area Agreements
LGA	Local Government Association
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MLG	Multi-Level Governance
NRF	Neighbourhood Renewal Funds
NSP	Northumberland Strategic Partnership
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PECT	Peterborough Environment City Trust
PL/PT	Policy Learning and Policy Transfer
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS	Planning Policy Statements
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy
SDS	Sustainable Development Strategy
SSI	Semi-Structured Interview
SSN	Sustainable Scotland Network
SWGO	South West Government Office
TMN	Trans-national Municipal Network
UKCIP	United Kingdom Climate Impacts Programme
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UN-habitat)

Declaration

This thesis has been written by me, and the material has not been submitted for a degree at any University. The work reported has been done by myself, and all information cited is acknowledged at the appropriate point in the text.

Statement of Copyright

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Chapter One: Introduction to City-to-City Co-operation

Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and subnational environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilizing and responding to the public to promote sustainable development (UNCED, 1992: 28.1).

Over the last thirty years there has been an increasing interest on the part of policy-makers and analysts in urban sustainability (Gleeson and Low, 2000; WCED, 1987; White and Whitney, 1992). Cities in both developing and developed countries are seen to be important to the realization of sustainable development because of their large populations, high consumption of resources and production of waste (Hall and Pfeiffer, 2000; White and Whitney, 1992). According to United Nations statistics, in 2008 'more than half its [the world's] human population, 3.3 billion people, will be living in urban areas' (UNPF, 2008, p. 1). This is expected to increase to almost 5 billion by 2030 (UNPF, 2008). Addressing problems in cities is critical because they are not only the 'focal point of present-day problems' but also where 'the future quality of people's lives will be determined' (Klimnt, 2000, p. xi). The notion behind sustainable development policies within an urban context is that they should contribute to improving the overall sustainability of a city. The city should be a settlement that has human welfare at its core. Humans should be able to live in an environmentally friendly environment that is safe from crime and social dis-order, where people have jobs, and where they can participate in local decision-making to identify their own needs and concerns within the community. Whitehead, for example, explains the United Nations Sustainable Cities Programme which defines a sustainable city as:

> A city where achievements in social, economic, and physical development are made to last. A Sustainable City has a lasting supply of the natural resources on which its development depends (using them only at a level of sustainable yield). A Sustainable City maintains a lasting security from environmental

> hazards which may threaten development achievements (allowing only for acceptable risk) (UNCHS/UNEP, 2001, p. 1) (Whitehead, 2003a, p. 1186)[1].

Within cities, policy-makers and analysts have placed significant emphasis on the potential for municipal local authorities to implement sustainable development. A local authority is defined by Wilson and Game as:

> A form of geographical and political decentralisation, in which directly elected councils, created by and subordinate to Parliament, have partial autonomy to provide a wide variety of services through various direct and indirect means, funded in part by local taxation (Wilson and Game, 2002, p. 33).

Local authorities are the level of elected governance that is the 'closest to the people' (UNCED, 1992: 28.1) and they are responsible for the provision of number of key services. Central to the position that local authorities should have a prominent role in addressing sustainable development has been the belief that various forms of co-operation between local authorities - here termed city-to-city co-operation (CTCC) - will enable them to effectively develop sustainability, and improve people's quality of life in urban areas. To understand sustainable development at the city level, it is important to consider how CTCC through networks and partnerships takes place. It is argued in thesis that CTCC is a structure of governance as links are forged between institutions. CTCC is also a process of governing as local authorities engage in the sharing and exchange of policies, strategies, expertise and experience with each other to address sustainable development objectives through learning and policy outcomes. Thus, the thesis undertakes an analysis of the structures, governance processes and learning and policy outcomes of CTCC governance. To date, little attention has been given to why and how CTCC processes take place or to the realities of their implementation. The thesis draws on the sustainable development and governance debates to address these critical issues.

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[1] The United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (UNCHS) has been renamed the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-habitat).

As a starting point, research has found that CTCC can take place on: a bi-lateral basis such as through twin-city arrangements and various partnerships; the basis of specific time-limited projects; or through multi-lateral and long-term links, usually forged through transnational or national networks (Bulkeley et al., 2003; Ewen and Hebbert, 2007; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Rashman and Hartley, 2002). Purported shifts in the nature of governance from hierarchy to (governance as) networks have created the political opportunity for CTCC. CTCC itself is occurring in two ways: first through top-down approaches, facilitated by international institutions (e.g. United Nations, European Union) and national government; and second, through bottom-up initiatives on the basis of innovation by local authorities. To examine the nature of CTCC, this thesis draws on understandings of networks as being 'self-organizing' (Rhodes, 1996, p. 652). Actors within networks, for example, have the capacity to: 'formulate and implement shared strategies (which involves gathering analysing information, setting priorities and solving problems)' (Schout and Jordan, 2005, p. 202). Actors within networks:

> ... exchange resources (for example, money, information, expertise) to achieve their objectives, to maximize their influence over outcomes, and to avoid becoming dependent on other players in the game (Rhodes, 1996, p. 658).

In short, 'networks resist government steering, develop their own policies and mould their environments' (Rhodes, 1996, p. 659). However, current debates about the nature of (urban) governance raise questions about the autonomy of networks and their importance in the contemporary political landscape. In this light, the significance and relevance of CTCC may also be called into question. This thesis sets out to examine this complex terrain. This introductory chapter situates the research within the debates on sustainable urban development. First, the chapter discusses the context and rationale for the PhD research. An examination of the policy drivers for sustainable development in the city is undertaken. There is also a discussion on how the CTCC research can inform understandings about achieving sustainable urban development through governance. Second, the research questions, aims, and objectives of the thesis are highlighted. Third, the chapter outlines the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Context and Rationale for the PhD Research

The significance of CTCC as an empirical phenomenon has emerged from the governance and sustainable development debates that draw attention to the importance of urban sustainability and the role of local authorities in addressing this. The key policy documents that promote urban sustainability and local authority action are discussed below.

1.1.1 Policy Drivers for Sustainable Development in the City

A range of supra-national (e.g. United Nations, European Union) and national White Papers, action plans, strategies, and policy documents have been published that have highlighted the importance of addressing sustainable urban development. The most widely used definition of sustainable development comes from 'Our Common Future' (WCED, 1987):

> Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987, p. 8).

The report gives recognition to conserving the environment – healthy environment for humans; rational use of renewable natural resources; conservation of non-renewable natural resources - whilst undertaking economic development (growth, efficiency, stability). It suggests that 'in its broadest sense' the objective of sustainable development is 'to promote harmony among human beings and between humanity and nature' (WCED, 1987, p. 65). Chapter 9 'The Urban Challenge' drew attention to the importance of creating urban communities that were more sustainable in developed and developing countries. The 'Our Common Future' report (WCED, 1987) has become central to debates on environmental discourse and achieving sustainability, because its definition of sustainable development promotes what Williams and Millington (2004) would identity as 'weak sustainability'[2]. 'Weak sustainability' implies there is an assumption that economic growth and resource depletion can continue – for example,

[2] The terms sustainable development and sustainability are used interchangeably, albeit Agymen and Evans (2004) note that development places focus on economic growth and increasing Gross Domestic Product whilst subjecting this to environmental controls. Sustainability implies more of a commitment to the environmental agenda and environmental policy (Selman, 1998; Sneddon, 2000).

through using fewer natural resources more efficiently. 'Strong sustainability' in contrast, means that societies should be looking to have less demand on the environment in the acknowledgment there is not enough supply of natural resources. Hence, societies should adapt to nature and the resource availability that it provides (Williams and Millington, 2004).

Subsequent to 'Our Common Future' (WCED, 1987) the United Nations has broadened the dimensions and concept of sustainable development to include social progress (equity, social cohesion, social mobility, participation, cultural identity) alongside economic growth and environmental protection. For example, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 at Rio de Janeiro (Earth Summit) identified three pillars of sustainable development - social progress, economic growth and environmental protection. Aside from the 'Our Common Future' report, Conca et al., (1995) explicitly refer to the Rio Conference as the one that put sustainable development firmly onto the political map and has drawn attention to the importance of addressing sustainable urban development. Chapter 7 of Agenda 21, for example, highlights the importance of improving human settlements and Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 emphasises the role of local authorities in addressing this (discussed further in Chapter Four this thesis).

The United Nations' commitment to promoting sustainable development can also be seen through its Human Settlement Programme (UN-habitat). The UN-habitat programme draws attention to adequate shelter and sustainable urban development. The Istanbul UN-habitat II Cities Summit in 1996 highlighted the importance of addressing quality of life issues within human settlements around the globe, with human welfare at the heart of the concern (UNCHS, 1996). The UN-habitat programme has drawn attention to the role of cities in not only contributing to global and local environmental problems, but also as a potential arena within which to address sustainable development (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004; Whitehead, 2003a) (Chapter Four). For example, the role of local authorities working with local governance partners (private sector and civil society) in the development and planning of shelter schemes, education, health centres, fresh water, infrastructure, waste, and energy; and local authorities should provide funds to support the policy implementation of these schemes.

Within the European context, a number of European Commission policy initiatives concerning the promotion of sustainable development have been influenced by the United Nations report on 'Our Common Future' (WCED, 1987), and the 1992 Earth Summit and Agenda 21 (Begin, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006; European Commission, 1997; Whitehead, 2003a). The 1990 Green Paper on the Urban Environment highlighted the European Commission's concerns about environmental pollution and urban growth (European Commission, 1990). The Fifth Environmental Action Programme in 1993 is entitled: 'Towards sustainability: a European Community programme of policy and action in relation to the environment and sustainable development' (European Commission, 1997). The 'Framework for Action for Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union' (CEC, 1998) has developed the setting for a specific urban environmental agenda within the wider framework of the EU environmental policy (Mills, 2005). The 'European Union Sustainable Development Strategy' (CEC, 2001a) was adopted by the Commission on the 15th May 2001. The strategy encourages local initiatives, partnerships, and strategies to tackle the problems faced by urban areas.

Similarly, the Sixth Environment Action Programme of the European Community 'Environment 2010: Our future, our choice' (CEC, 2001b) was established on the 24th January 2001. This reaffirmed the importance of integrating environmental objectives with economic ones to move towards sustainable development, and the use of environmental legislation to achieve this. It called for the development of a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment to improve the quality of life through an integrated approach that considers the economic, social and environmental well-being of urban areas. The European Commission published a communication 'Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment' in 2004 (CEC, 2004), and the actual 'Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment' was published in 2006 (CEC, 2006). Many of these later strategies have sustainable development at their core because of the 1999 legislation that was agreed in the Amsterdam Treaty. This stated that sustainable development and environmental protection had to be considered in the implementation of European Community policies (Mills, 2005). Similarly, coalitions of municipalities have promoted the importance of addressing sustainable development objectives and implementing sustainable urban policies within cities themselves. The European Sustainable Cities Campaign, established in 1994, is an example of this (see Chapter Four of this thesis).

In the United Kingdom, the influence of the United Nations programmes on central government policy-making can be seen in the emphasis to produce its first national Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) entitled 'Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy' (HMSO, 1994). This Strategy, for example, promoted the importance of local authorities developing LA 21 strategies (see Chapter Four of this thesis). The revised SDS published in 1999 'A Better Quality of Life - A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK' (DETR, 1999) defines sustainable development as: 'a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come' (DETR, 1999, 1.1). The strategy takes into consideration economic, environmental, and social principles that were promoted by Agenda 21. Thus, it focussed on more holistic interpretations of sustainable development than its predecessor published in 1994 (HMSO, 1994) which had a more explicit environmental emphasis and was influenced by the United Nations 'Our Common Future' document.

The latest national SDS 'Securing the Future' (HMSO, 2005) was published in 2005. This strategy has had a very significant influence on perceptions of sustainable development at the national policy-making level. The wording shows that government policy has moved on from LA 21 to that of urban renewal, urban regeneration, and community involvement through the Sustainable Communities agenda - for which there is a separate Sustainable Communities Plan. In essence this is an approach used by central government to bring sustainable development into its planning policies – for example, through the use of Planning Policy Guidance and Statements (Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley and Betsill, 2005; ODPM, 2005)[3]. The national SDSs and the Sustainable Community Plan are the key documents that have had an influence on the emergence of CTCC within the UK, and these are explored further in Chapter Four. However, aside from the national SDSs, Government departments have also promoted a number of other policies that highlight the importance of addressing sustainable development within cities. For example, as Whitehead (2003a, p. 1186) notes, these policies include: 'This Common Inheritance: Britain's Environmental Strategy' (ch.8 'Towns and Cities') (HMSO, 1990); the 'Good practice guide on the Impacts of Environmental Improvements in Urban Regeneration' (HMSO, 1995); The 'UK National Report for Habitat II' (DoE, 1996); 'The Single Regeneration Budget: A Guide for Partnerships'

[3] The Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is now called Communities and Local Government (CLG).

(including new sustainable development guidelines, pp. 22-23) (DETR, 1998); 'Urban Task Force Report' (chs 1-2 on the urban environment) (DETR, 1999); and 'Our Towns and Cities: the Future Delivering an Urban Renaissance' (DETR, 2000).

Furthermore, there have been a range of bottom-up policy drivers pushing the significance of sustainability to be considered in national policies. Agyman and Evans (2004) suggest that non-government organisations such as Friends of the Earth have had an instrumental role and varying degrees of success in lobbying central government and the Scottish Executive for sustainable development principles to be considered in national policy-making.

1.1.2 Defining Sustainable (Urban) Development and (Urban) Sustainability

Sustainable urban development is about achieving sustainable development objectives and policy outcomes, with the additional focus on the urban environment. Satterthwaite (1997) has usefully modified work by Mitlin and Satterthwaite (1994) in analysing the WCED (1987) to illustrate how sustainable urban development can be interpreted at the city level (Table 1.1). The processes and agendas may differ however, in accordance with the interpretations as to what constitutes sustainable urban development at different places and different times. Despite the attention given to sustainable urban development within the city (Section 1.1.1) Bulkeley and Betsill (2005), and Whitehead (2003a) argue that analyses of sustainable urban development have generally focussed on the built environment in terms of technical factors such as 'institutional restructuring, traffic management, architectural design and the development of green technologies' (Whitehead, 2003a, p. 1187) (see, for example, While et al., 2004). As such, Bulkeley and Betsill (2005), and Whitehead (2003a) suggest that analysts have not given consideration to the ways that governance is being delivered and governing takes place to address urban sustainability:

> ... the lack of engagement between those concerned with the analysis of urban governance and those whose focus is on sustainable cities has also led to a relatively impoverished conception of the governance context in many accounts of urban sustainability (Bulkeley and Betsill, 2005, p. 58).

Table 1.1 The Multiple Goals of Sustainable Development as Applied to Cities

Meeting the needs of the present....

Economic needs—includes access to an adequate livelihood or productive assets; also economic security when unemployed, ill, disabled or otherwise unable to secure a livelihood.

Social, cultural and health needs—includes a shelter which is healthy, safe, affordable and secure, within a neighbourhood with provision for piped water, sanitation, drainage, transport, health care, education and child development. Also, a home, workplace and living environment protected from environmental hazards, including chemical pollution. Also important are needs related to people's choice and control—including homes and neighbourhoods which they value and where their social and cultural priorities are met. Shelters and services must meet the specific needs of children and of adults responsible for most child-rearing (usually women). Achieving this implies a more equitable distribution of income between nations and, in most, within nations.

Political needs—includes freedom to participate in national and local politics and in decisions regarding management and development of one's home and neighbourhood—within a broader framework which ensures respect for civil and political rights and the implementation of environmental legislation.

.... without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

Minimising use or waste of non-renewable resources—includes minimising the consumption of fossil fuels in housing, commerce, industry and transport plus substituting renewable sources where feasible. Also, minimising waste of scarce mineral resources (reduce use, re-use, recycle, reclaim). There are also cultural, historical and natural assets within cities that are irreplaceable and thus non-renewable—for instance, historical districts and parks and natural landscapes which provide space for play, recreation and access to nature.

Sustainable use of finite renewable resources—cities drawing on fresh-water resources at levels which can be sustained (with recycling and re-use promoted). Keeping to a sustainable ecological footprint in terms of land area on which city-based producers and consumers draw for agricultural and forest products and biomass fuels.

Biodegradable wastes not overtaxing capacities of renewable sinks (e.g. capacity of a river to break down biodegradable wastes without ecological degradation).

Non-biodegradable wastes/emissions not overtaxing (finite) capacity of local and global sinks to absorb or dilute them without adverse effects (e.g. persistent pesticides, greenhouse gases and stratospheric ozone-depleting chemicals).

Source: Satterthwaite (1997, p. 1681). Adapted from Mitlin and Satterthwaite (1994)

Governance concerns how actors from government and other institutions (e.g. local authorities, the private sector, civil society) govern in society, for example, through networks and partnerships, to address economic, social, and environmental objectives in policy-making and policy outcomes. Environmental governance debates draw attention to how actors co-operate through governing practices to address sustainable development. Bulkeley and Betsill (2005) note that to address sustainability within cities there is a role for policy learning in the sharing of ideas through networks between cities:

> Strategies to implement urban sustainability usually rest on the development of exemplar projects or 'best practices', from which lessons can be learned, and applied, within the urban arena or transferred between cities. Such

> approaches, which characterise many EU programmes, UK government initiatives and the activities of transnational municipal networks engaged in promoting urban sustainability, have been dubbed 'new localism' (Marvin & Guy, 1997) (Bulkeley and Betsill, 2005, p. 47).

In short, Betsill and Bulkeley (2005) specifically draw attention to the role of CTCC in urban sustainability. This is because different agencies and institutions (e.g. the European Commission and central government) and local authorities themselves recognise that they should draw on or share their policy learning with practitioners from other authorities through networks to address sustainable urban development. Thus, the academic debates on urban sustainability offer an insight into CTCC because they suggest that it has an important role in the implementation of urban sustainability. The literature on CTCC draws attention to the fact that local authority networks and partnerships have a governing role – for example, policy learning and policy transfer and the use of best practice (Bulkeley et al., 2003; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Kern and Bulkeley, 2008; Rashman and Hartley, 2002); project finance (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley et al., 2003; Leitner et al., 2002) and lobbying supra-national and national institutions to influence policy making and its outcomes (Leitner and Sheppard, 1999; Ward and Williams, 1997).

Nonetheless, and particularly in terms of understanding the role of local authority networks and partnerships in implementing sustainable urban development, this literature is constrained in three ways. First, it does not always distinguish between whether CTCC is undertaken to address sustainable development objectives or more general policies associated with urban economic regeneration (Chapter Two). Second, it does not discuss how effective CTCC is as governance processes and structures to achieve sustainable development. Third, there is a lack of conceptual and empirical material as to how governing processes take place between local authorities to implement sustainable urban development (Chapter Two). Similarly, the governance literature that draws attention to networks as a form of governance (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Marsh, 1998a; Marsh and Smith, 2000; Rhodes, 1996) neglects the processes of governing. The thesis contributes to debates about urban sustainability and urban governance. The substantive chapters of this thesis inform these debates and assess the implications of CTCC for conceptualizing environmental governance.

1.2 Research Questions, Aims and Objectives

As the last section suggests, debates on governance and urban sustainability provide a means for examining the significance and implications of CTCC. Links between local authorities create various partnerships or networks through which actors can deliver governance to address local sustainable development objectives. The central aim of the thesis is to examine the implications of CTCC for conceptualising environmental governance. The four research questions can help to inform this:

1. To what extent are UK-based local authorities engaging in CTCC?
2. What sorts of links, exchanges, networks and partnerships are being established through the practices of CTCC undertaken by UK local authorities?
3. How, and with what implications, do policy transfer and policy learning emerge through CTCC?
4. To what extent, and with what effect, do practices of CTCC disturb existing forms of policy delivery and implementation for urban sustainability?

Three main methods have been used to investigate the research questions of the thesis: postal surveys sent to one hundred local authorities who are members of the 'European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign' (ESCTC); semi-structured interviews and document analysis. From the survey findings, four case studies were selected: Peterborough City Council and Northumberland County Council in the policy area of climate change adaptation; and Aberdeen City Council and Plymouth City Council in the policy area of community planning. Climate change adaptation was chosen because survey respondents indicated this to be a policy area of emerging relevance to them in light of political scrutiny, and they are keen to forge networks and partnerships for policy learning to take place. Community planning was chosen because survey respondents suggested this is a policy area that has sustainability at its core, for example, in the development of Sustainable Community Strategies (Raco et al., 2006) and is an area that has potential for CTCC to be explored.

1.3 The Thesis Structure

Chapter Two 'Examining CTCC as a characteristic in the political landscape' introduces the conceptual framework. The chapter draws on the governance debates to setout the theoretical context for CTCC. The chapter divides into four sections. The first section argues that the 'hollowing out' (Rhodes, 1997, p. 138) and changing role of the state (Brenner, 1999; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999), as well as the shift from government to governance, have allowed for the emergence of self-organizational (governance) networks and their diffusion in the political landscape. It is argued in the thesis that this has created the political opportunity for CTCC as a form, and a process of governance that can lead to learning and policy outcomes. In doing so, however, it also recognizes the role of hierarchy in shaping this governance, and introduces the concept of 'meta-governance' (Jessop, 2002) in order to provide a meaningful understanding of this. Networks are only self-regulating to a certain extent because they can be created, controlled, and steered by a meta-governor and orchestrated through a form of hierarchy (e.g. EU, State) (Jessop, 2000). Meta-governance implies a more hands-off guidance role in the facilitation of CTCC, whereas hierarchy suggests intervention in the governing processes between local authorities. The thesis argues that meta-governance and hierarchy have important outcomes for policy.

The second section draws on specific governance literatures concerning the nature of networks. It argues that whilst the policy networks (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1997) and governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005) literature provide extremely useful conceptual insights in highlighting the key characteristics of governing in self-organizational networks - for example, resources, the development of inter-personal relationships and trust between actors, co-operation, and structure of networks - they are not sufficient in explaining how governing processes take place. This is because 'how' governing actually takes place through these characteristics is neglected. It does not, for example, grapple with ideas of power. The third section introduces an analytical tool developed by the author of this thesis. It is used as a governance framework to help explore the key characteristics and relative autonomy of governing through CTCC. Finally, section four draws conclusions.

Chapter Three 'Researching CTCC' is the methodology chapter. This chapter presents the methodology which shaped the design and implementation of the empirical

research, the evidence gathered, and its subsequent analysis. The chapter divides into five sections. First, the epistemological implications of the research are explored and the reasons as to why a critical approach to this has been employed are discussed. Second, the role of the postal survey in undertaking the empirical research is discussed, and the criteria for identifying the four case studies is highlighted. Third, the case study research strategy is highlighted, and the role of semi-structured interviews, and discourse analysis is examined. Furthermore, the transcribing and coding in undertaking data analysis are examined. Fourth, the case studies are introduced in terms of geographical locations and policy areas of analysis. Finally, section five draws conclusions.

Chapter Four 'The Emergence and Extent of CTCC' is the first of the three substantive chapters. The chapter aims to examine the emergence of CTCC in the political landscape and to discuss why it is seen to be important to governance. The chapter draws on the empirical survey findings and case study material to explore the extent to which CTCC is taking place overseas and within the UK domestic arena. The chapter divides into four sections. First, the emergence of CTCC through a range of formal top-down (e.g. European funding programmes, LA 21) and bottom-up (e.g. policy learning) drivers discussed in policy documents (e.g. European Commission, 1997; UNCED, 1992) and the CTCC literature (e.g. Ewen and Hebbert, 2007; John 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Martins and Pearce, 2000) is explored. Second, the experiences of the actors involved in CTCC are examined. This chapter questions whether the recognised drivers of CTCC (e.g. European funding programmes, LA 21) are as formalized, prominent, and as effective as previous research has suggested. The chapter argues that they are not as effective as past studies have suggested because local authorities' priorities increasingly lie with mobilizing time, labour, and financial resources towards achieving statutory targets within cities. Therefore, there are a range of other drivers facilitating CTCC – it can for example, involve bottom-up informal forms of engagement, and a personal interest by practitioners to be involved in policy learning. The implications of this for CTCC are taken forward in Chapter Five, for example, the increasing use of informality between actors, and policy learning through virtual interaction between local authorities. Third, practitioner's experiences are drawn upon to discuss the reasons as to why they consider CTCC is created, and why links between local authorities disappear. The section discusses how effective the formal

policy drivers discussed throughout the chapter have been in facilitating CTCC. Finally, section four draws conclusions.

Chapter Five 'Policy Learning and Policy Transfer' (PL/PT) explores how the processes of governing within CTCC take place. There are five respective sections that examine this: the notion of PL/PT and relevance to CTCC; the role of formal/informal networks; the use of best practice; and governing through benchmarking. An underlying theme of this chapter is that whilst the self-organizational (governance) networks literature (Jessop, 2000; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1997) emphasises the development of trust, inter-personal relationships, and face-to-face engagement for successful co-operation to take place – the use of virtual interaction within networks and partnerships is generally neglected. The chapter explores the policy implications for the ways in which PL/PT and the use of best practice is incorporated into policy development through face-to-face engagement, and virtual interaction. Section five draws conclusions.

Chapter Six 'Enabling and Constraining CTCC' is the final empirical chapter, and divides into three sections. The first section discusses the role of hierarchy and meta-governance as externalities that can create and facilitate governing within CTCC. The underlying argument of the chapter is that hierarchy and meta-governance processes have important outcomes for policy. The implications for constraining or enabling CTCC are discussed. Second, the factors that shape the internal dynamics of networks are examined. The section provides insight into the significance of the role of actors and structure within networks and partnerships as is discussed in the governance literature that draws attention to self-organizational networks (Coleman and Perl, 1999; Leitner et al., 2003; Marsh, 1998a, 1998b; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003). The importance of actors working together to deliver policy on the ground is discussed, and the role of individual actors (e.g. seniority, motivation) is examined. Furthermore, the role of 'rules of the game' defined by network participants as an effective mechanism in shaping the network is explored. Finally, section three highlights the conclusions.

Chapter Seven 'Conclusions' completes the thesis with a summary of the conclusions. In light of the research questions the theoretical implications, empirical findings, policy implications, and policy recommendations of CTCC are discussed.

Chapter Two: Examining CTCC as a Characteristic in the Political Landscape

> ... the recent expansion of networks at the expense of markets and hierarchies and of governance at the expense of government is not just a pendular swing in some recent succession of dominant modes of policy-making. It reflects a shift in the fundamental structures of the real world and a corresponding shift in the centre of gravity around which policy cycles move (Jessop, 1998, p. 32).

This chapter develops a framework through which to analyse the emergence, nature and significance of CTCC in environmental governance. The theoretical architecture of the chapter is the body of governance literature: that concerning state structuration, policy networks, network governance, governance networks, and meta-governance. These debates are a useful starting point for analysing the political opportunity for CTCC as a critical feature in the political landscape. The emergence of CTCC can arguably be explained by the purported shift from government to governance. Governance analysts (Peters, 2000; Raco et al., 2006) suggest this has seen a reformation of a local authority's functions – for example, not only to deliver central government policy but to have the autonomy to assist the government in policy-making and to shape policy in local contexts. Similarly, analysts that examine the purported governance shift from a state structuration approach argue that the state is increasingly 'hollowed out' (Rhodes, 1997, p. 138) and/or state power has changed (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Cox, 1998; Jessop, 2002; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999). This approach is helpful in explaining how local authority networks and partnerships have spread, with power devolved downwards to network structures, which in turn has allowed for the political opportunity for the diffusion of CTCC. Throughout this thesis, governance is discussed as modes, forms, processes, and learning outcomes. In turn, this conception of governance has implications for understanding and exploring CTCC. There are in principle higher modes of governance classified in the governance literature as meta-governance, hierarchy, markets, and networks, through which governing to achieve sustainable development objectives takes place (Kohler-Koch, 2002; Stoker, 1998). There are also lower modes of governance which are discussed within this thesis as specific forms of governance (Eising and Kohler-Koch, 1999a).

This refers more specifically to the structures involved in governing, for example, specific local authority networks and partnerships (Section 2.2).

To date, within the context of CTCC, discussions of local authority networks and partnerships have concerned three governing processes: (1) lobbying supra-national and national institutions for funding resources (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley et al., 2003; Leitner et al., 2002); (2) Policy learning and policy transfer (PL/PT) and the use of best practice (Bulkeley et al., 2003; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Kern and Bulkeley, 2008; Rashman and Hartley, 2002); (3) lobbying supra-national and national institutions to influence policy making and its outcomes (Ward and Williams, 1997; Leitner and Sheppard, 1999). The literature cited here concerning the reasons as to why CTCC is undertaken, is however, inadequate at explaining 'how' the processes of CTCC are taking place, and how CTCC is shaping and influencing the political landscape. Similarly, the governance literature that draws attention to networks as a form of governance through exploring the notions of policy networks (Marsh, 1998a, 1998b; Marsh and Smith, 2000; Rhodes, 1996, 1997) and governance networks (Kooiman, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a; Rhodes, 1997), neglects the processes of governing. It does not provide sufficient conceptual or empirical explanations as to how these processes within networks and partnerships take place, and how networks are forged between institutions. Furthermore, it does not satisfactorily distinguish between how networks govern concerning more general concepts of governing in the delivery of public goods and services, and environmental governance, that is, governing to address and deliver on sustainable development objectives. This means that the networks concept is useful for understanding how CTCC might take place, but it may not fully capture CTCC specifically in relation to environmental governing practices. This chapter identifies the weaknesses in the governance literature, and explores how they can be addressed to understand the particular issue of CTCC, and taken forward for analysis in the substantive chapters.

This chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section argues that networks have a role to play in the political landscape, as a range of scholars that study these suggest (Bulkeley, 2004; Coleman and Perl, 1999; Davies, 2002; Kohler-Koch, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1997). However, it also argues that despite the emphasis given to the role of networks by policy-makers and the academic governance

literature as an alternative mode of governance and governing, there is a plurality of governing that takes place in the political landscape that cannot be ignored. The potential implication of hierarchy and meta-governance (e.g. the governing role of the European Union [EU], and state) requires closer investigation.

The second section critically examines if theories concerning networks as a mode (e.g. network governance), and as a specific form of governance (e.g. policy networks and governance networks, and conceptual developments of these) are sufficient and adequate for understanding and analysing CTCC. Section three builds on the preceding sections to introduce a framework for understanding CTCC. This is an analytical tool that is used in the substantive chapters to inform the debates in the governance literature and to analyse the empirical findings as to how CTCC governs and takes place. The framework is used to explore the relative autonomy of local authority networks and partnerships. Finally, section four draws conclusions and outlines the implications of CTCC for conceptualizing environmental governance.

2.1 The Governance Debate

This section draws on two key governance debates – the changing role and restructuring of the state; and the purported shift from government to governance – to argue that networks have an important role to play in the political landscape as a mode of governance. The concept of governance has a number of meanings (Davies, 2002; Kooiman, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1996; Rhodes, 1997; Stoker, 1998, 2000). This is not surprising as governance originates from a number of different disciplines, each with their own interpretation of the term (Jessop, 1998; Kersbergen and Van Waarden, 2004; Stoker, 1998). Nevertheless, there is a general consensus that it is about '... the changing nature of government and how to understand such changes' (Rhodes, 2000, p. 85). In short, governance:

> Indicates a gradual problematisation of the traditional focus on the sovereign political institutions that allegedly govern society top-down through enforceable laws and bureaucratic regulations (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003, p. 2).

Governing can be considered to be 'authoritatively allocating resources and exercising control and co-ordination' (Rhodes, 1996, p. 653). Within the context of this thesis resources are understood to translate as power (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992). It is through the holding of power-resources that society is governed, for example, the actors and institutions that have the influence, money, legitimacy, information/knowledge, access, contacts and expertise to govern society (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992). Governing is also associated with modes of governance. Governing is the actions undertaken by actors through hierarchy, markets, and networks to achieve governance outcomes. 'Political landscape' is a term used in the thesis to describe the plurality of modes of governance – hierarchy, markets, networks – that take place in governing society. It also concerns the role of CTCC in the landscape as a lower mode, a specific form of governance (Section 2.2) in governing society. Environmental governance is more specifically about how actors from but beyond government (e.g. local authorities, the private sector, civil society) govern to address sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental - objectives in policy-making and policy outcomes. It gives recognition to environmental policy considerations within the wider context of economic development (Jordan et al., 2003; Lenschow, 1999).

The traditional mode of governing in the aftermath of World War II in North-Western Europe and North America was to deliver public services through hierarchical structures and mechanisms. Hierarchy involves centralized control of local institutions. Central government co-ordinates public services through authoritative decision-making – it instructs and directs local authorities on how to deliver local services (Brenner, 2004; Rhodes, 1998; Rousenau, 1992; Scharpf 1997). Hence, a 'hierarchical' mode of governing generally refers to 'governing with government' (Rhodes, 1996). Through the hierarchical system in North-Western Europe, and North America, national governments during the 1950s and 1970s governed through the Keynesian welfare national state model (Jessop, 1999). The welfare state is a term used as 'shorthand for the state's activities in four broad areas: cash benefits; health care; education; and food, housing, and other welfare services' (Barr, 2004, p. 21). However, from an economic perspective hierarchical governance was proving to be excessively inefficient because resource allocation through hierarchical structures to a local level was not necessarily being used effectively, and the system was proving to be expensive because of the quantity of public funds used in supporting public services. Problems mounted when

the recession of the mid-1970s hit the Western countries. State intervention through the welfare system was seen to be failing (Jessop, 2000). As Hutton (1996) explains:

> Keynesian economics as practiced in the UK had limits. Industrial policy was not a success; income policies were an ignominious failure. The welfare state was creaking at the seams, unable to meet the new demands placed upon it (Hutton, 1996, p. 55).

In other words, the state was not seen as 'the solution but rather as a chief source of several problems in society but most distinctly the poor economic performance' (Pierre, 2000, p. 2). Thus, Pierre explains, the 1980s and 1990s saw changes in governing structures and practices in several advanced democratic countries. Prime Minister Thatcher in the UK, and President Reagan in the Unites States, for example, decided that the way forward to address these problems was an ideological shift away from intervention by the state to include: deregulation, privatization, managerialism in the public sector, and the creation of 'semi-autonomous agencies to replace governmental centres of command and control' (Pierre, 2000, p.2). These changes in the power of the state has led Rhodes (1997, p. 17) to suggest there is a 'hollowing out' of its power and functions (Section 2.1.1). Thus, scholars suggest that since the 1990s there has been a new era of governance with the introduction of market governance and governance through network systems (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1996; Rousenau, 1992; Scharpf, 1988; Stoker, 1998).

The idea of market governance is that there is a minimization of the central government administrative system. Central government transfers to quasi-market and the market or private sector as many tasks as possible whilst its role is to set the framework and 'rules of the game' for these actors to carry out their functions (Bovaird and Loffler, 2002; Le Galès, 2002; Rhodes, 1998). Market governance is based on the motivation of individual actors to maximize their profit margin whilst delivering more efficient and better quality public services as they have the resources and skills available to achieve this (Rhodes, 1996). Nevertheless, scholars note that market solutions are not applicable to every instance as the co-ordination of price and competition makes it difficult to prevent/overcome market failure (Jessop, 2002; Rhodes, 1998). The notion of governance as networks which Marsh and Rhodes (1992) and Rhodes (1996, 1997) describe as policy networks, and Marcussen and Torfing (2003) governance networks

(Section 2.2), have emerged as a response to market and hierarchical governance failure. Network forms of governing have particularly been encouraged by the 'New Labour' Blair Government (Bovaird and Loffler, 2002; Le Galès, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1997, 1998; Stoker, 1998). This has involved a blurring of the boundaries between the private, voluntary, and public sector through horizontal interaction concerning specific forms of networks (Jessop, 1997; Kooiman, 2003; Rhodes, 1997; Stoker, 1998). Stoker's description of governance as networks is:

> A set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government . . . Governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues . . . Governance is about autonomous self-governing networks of actors (Stoker, 1998, p. 18).

In relation to the urban sphere, scholars explain that actors in networks work together through horizontal forms of interaction within and between cities transnationally and nationally to address policy problems and to deliver public services (Borzel, 1998; Bulkeley et al., 2003; Rhodes, 1997; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a). Sub-national actors governing through networks at the tier of governance closest to localities are more likely to use resources more effectively and efficiently. To understand how the concept of governance as networks has emerged, which has allowed for the political opportunity of CTCC, the 'hollowing out' (Rhodes, 1997) of the state debates are explored in the next section.

2.1.1 The Hollowing Out of the Nation State Debate

The argument put forward by scholars (Brenner, 1999; Rhodes, 1997; Swyngedouw et al., 2003) that study state structuration is that upward and downward vertical shifts of power from the nation state have allowed for the political opportunity of governance as networks – the nation state is being rescaled or 'hollowed out' (Rhodes, 1997, p.138) in processes of governance, through 'the loss of functions' (Rhodes, 1997, p.17):

> This ongoing re-scaling of territoriality is simultaneously transferring state power upwards to supranational agencies such as the European Union (EU) and devolving it downwards towards the state's regional and local levels,

> which are better positioned to promote and regulate urban-regional restructuring (Brenner, 1999, p. 439).

These vertical processes give greater recognition, new importance, and enhanced power from the nation state downwards to sub-national actors through devolved and decentralized power; and upwards to supranational regulatory institutions such as the EU, World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Bank:

> Virtually all governments, in conjunction with economic elites, at every conceivable scale of governance, have taken measures to align their social and economic policy to the "requirements" of this new competitive world (dis)order and the forces of a neo-liberal world economy (Swyngedouw et al., 2003, p15).

State restructuring is linked to the inefficiency of the hierarchical system on the one hand (Section 2.1), and a strategic move by the nation state to adjust to the complexity of global neo-liberal reforms on the other (Brenner, 1999; Swyngedouw et al., 2003). Thus, state restructuring has involved the minimisation of the state and hierarchy through the emergence and spread of markets, and networks (Larner, 2000), and the rescaling of the economy in the globalized world. The argument follows that a reconfiguration of spaces and scales through the political restructuring of the nation state has allowed for the emergence of a 'new political economy of scale' (Jessop, 2002, p. 11) at the supra-national and sub-national tiers of governance. The shift of power upwards can create a defensive barrier to global competition as global regions create protective alliances (e.g. the EU) to protect trade and industry from competitive threats from other regions. Furthermore, the upwards flow of power can allow for global regulation of trade where economic growth might have negative social and environmental consequences.

Scholars suggest that the shift of power downwards can allow regional and local institutions to be more competitive in their local economies, and to more effectively address local needs and concerns (Brenner, 1999; Le Galès, 2002; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002). The state decentralizes its power to local governments through the transfer of some of its financial resources and decision-making influence. The restructuring and rescaling of the state can be seen as a political opportunity for the

emergence of CTCC by enabling local authorities to share knowledge and expertise, and to have a greater role in influencing the policy-making process of public policy and its outcomes (Brenner, 1999; Cox, 1998; Jessop, 2002; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999; Pierre and Peters 2000; Rhodes, 1997; Stoker, 1998; Swyngedouw, 2000). However, an implication of the 'hollowing out thesis' for CTCC, is that whilst it acknowledges the role of cities, these are generally neglected by state scholars (Brenner, 1999; Swyngedouw et al., 2003) as they focus on the nation state. Furthermore, where attention is given to the role of city-to-city networks, it generally concerns the involvement of public and private actors, rather than specific local authority networks or partnerships. Within the EU, for example, Fleurke and Willemse (2006) suggest that there has been the:

> ...establishment of all kinds of transnational networks in different regions which cover all thinkable inter-organisational relations between public and private institutions, serving a wide variety of purposes: exchange of information, employment, reduction of industrial decline, cultural, exchange etc. (Fleurke and Willemse, 2006, p. 85).

Similarly, within the context of networks within the nation state, Rhodes summarizes, that these:

> ... bring together policy makers and the implementing agencies, and by so doing increase the available expertise and information ... networks bring together many actors to negotiate about a policy, increasing the acceptability of that policy and improving the likelihood of compliance ... networks increase the resources available for policy making by drawing together the public, private, and voluntary sectors (Rhodes, 1997, p. 83).

Whilst the restructuring of the state has allowed for the political opportunity of CTCC with the emergence and diffusion of networks, the increasing number of transnational networks that specifically involve only local authority actors, have 'so far remained overlooked, within the literature on global environmental governance' (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004, p. 476). Thus, as Betsill and Bulkeley go on to note:

> ...given their prevalence, particularly within Europe, and the significant role many authors have attributed to local governments and communities in putting sustainable development into practice, we have argued that such networks deserve analysis in their own right (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004, p. 489).

Interestingly, the emergence and significance of local authority networks in governing through policy learning, for example, Local Agenda 21, is documented in greater breadth and detail in a range of policy documents (Chapter Four), than it is in the academic literature on governance. The empirical contribution of this thesis is to take forward the general absence of empirical analysis in the academic literature (e.g. Cox, 1998; Jessop, 2002; Pierre and Peters 2000; Rhodes, 1997; Stoker, 1998) of the governing processes within transnational and domestic local authority networks and partnerships (Chapters Five and Six). The 'hollowing out' thesis and restructuring of the state debates also consider how networks link to the different scales of governance (e.g. EU and nation state) through Multi-Level Governance (MLG) processes (Hooghe and Marks, 1996). As well as creating opportunities for sub-national autonomy, and drawing attention to the role of local authorities in the political landscape, the restructuring of the state is leading to new forms of MLG (Hooghe and Marks, 1996).

2.1.2 The Multi-Level Governance Debates

The MLG debates are important to understanding CTCC as they can help to explain the political opportunity for the emergence and spread of governance as networks through the restructuring processes of the state. MLG is a concept that has evolved in line with the understanding of the way that the EU operates through transnational networks by member states and their sub-national governments (Benington and Harvey, 1998; Bulkeley and Betsill, 2005; Hooghe and Marks, 2003; John, 2001; Jordon, 2001; Leitner et al., 2002; Pierre and Peters, 2000). There are two main models of MLG - 'Type I', and 'Type II'. 'Type I' MLG was developed in the early 1990s by Garry Marks at a time when the EU was viewed as a federal model. The Commission allocates power to networks, the state retains its central role, and there is a distinct hierarchy of nested scales at the tiers of government:

> A system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers – supranational, national, regional, and local – as a result of the broad process of institutional creation and decisional reallocation that has pulled some previously centralised functions of the state up to the supranational level and some down to the local/regional level (Marks, 1993, p. 392) (John, 2000, p. 882).

The above quotation shows that the local authority's role is seen as responding to the power given to them by the interaction between the EU and nation states, rather than their own independent autonomy (Bulkeley, et al., 2003; Jeffrey, 2000; John, 2000). Marks acknowledges in his later work (Hooghe and Marks, 1996, 2001, 2003) that alongside 'Type I' MLG there is a 'Type II'. Unlike in the former model, the distribution of authority between the tiers of governance is not nested, as 'neat scales, or levels, or tiers, disappear–they meld into one another' (Hooghe and Marks, 2001, p. 7):

> The absence of an overarching model of governance is a fundamental feature of the European polity. Multilevel governance describes authority relations that are unstable, contested, territorially heterogeneous, and non-hierarchical, rather than stable, consensual, territorially uniform, and hierarchical (Hooghe and Marks, 1996, p. 91).

Usefully, much of the work on MLG has focussed on the role of local authorities rather than public and private actors that are found in more general understandings of governance as networks. In terms of specific studies, Jeffery (2000), John (2000), Pearce (2000), Hooghe and Marks (2003), Schultze (2003), Fleurke and Willemse (2006), and Marshall (2005) argue that a critical measure of the involvement of local authorities in Europe is the extent to which they believe that they are capable of shaping EU policies through MLG processes - albeit that it is not always clear whether Type I or Type II MLG is being referred to. However, these studies tend to focus on the increasing presence of sub-national offices and local authorities interaction within Europe – the vertical links between a local authority (Sub-National Authority [SNA]), central government and the European Commission – rather than how local authorities within Europe might link-up with each other in CTCC through horizontal co-ordination and networks. Jefferey (2000), for example, notes that MLG draws attention to:

> ...the spin-offs which emerge from interplay between central state and European-level institutions and, more or less incidentally, disperse decision-making powers to SNAs and empower them to engage with and influence the EU policy process (Marks, 1997) (Jefferey, 2000, p. 7).

Exactly which MLG approach – 'Type I' or 'Type II' – is most appropriate for understanding the political opportunity for local authorities and how they might govern through CTCC is an open question. In terms of the typology of MLG, the role of local authorities is much clearer under the 'Type I' MLG federal model; power is allocated to sub-national actors from the supra-national or national state and there is a distinct hierarchy of nested scales at the tiers of governance (Hooghe and Marks, 1996). Section 2.1.4 argues, for example, that the role of the EU and the state should not be ignored in the political landscape, thereby supporting the argument that 'Type I' MLG is most appropriate for situating CTCC. However, a weakness of the 'Type I' approach is that it does not cater for municipal capacity to mobilize resources to co-operate to lobby EU and national institutions, to influence policy-making and policy outcomes, and to pursue their own objectives.

In contrast, the analysis of 'Type II' MLG draws attention to the potential autonomy of municipalities and their networks and the ways in which this might challenge and redefine governance capacity (Bulkeley, et al., 2003). However, the role and importance of local authorities involved in public networks and partnerships in the EU is not necessarily as clearly defined as it is in 'Type I' MLG analysis. This is because analysis of 'Type II' MLG gives recognition to the prominence of private actors in urban politics, for example, in public-private partnerships. Furthermore, the absence of nested scales means that it is problematic to understand how local authorities undertake a lobbying role in terms of approaching the EU or state. This is because the scales meld into each other and therefore analysis of the processes of interaction between local authority actors and those at other tiers of governance may not be as clear and straight forward to understand as they would through 'Type I' analysis. Thus, if anything, the most appropriate way of understanding and examining CTCC is through a reworking of 'Type I' MLG that also takes into consideration 'Type II'. For example, Jessop's 'new political economy of scale' (Jessop, 2002, p. 11) and the state restructuration debates as discussed (Section 2.1.2) give recognition to scales between the tiers of governance,

albeit that these are relational and non-hierarchical. In short, these scales allow for two-way processes of engagement between actors on and at the different scales of governance in the governing processes of PL/PT and lobbying through CTCC.

Despite the potential insight from MLG approaches for examining CTCC, Jordan (2001) argues that: 'MLG provides an appealing *picture* of what the EU looks like but is weak in explaining which levels are important and why' (Jordan, 2001, p. 194). Whilst MLG sets a framework for analysis, it does not explain the processes involved in governance, the role of cities and how these link up; neither does it readily consider the complexity of vertical and horizontal interactions of policy-making produced on each respective scale (Goodwin et al., 2006; Jordan, 2001; Peters and Pierre, 2004; Scharpf, 2001). This matters to CTCC as governing within local authority networks can involve interaction with institutions at other tiers of governance such as central government or the European Commission. This is because these institutions can facilitate local authority networks and partnerships through funding programmes. The substantive chapters inform the debates on the governing processes that take place through MLG – for example, how local authority networks and partnerships link-up to central government and European Commission institutions.

Another important concern is that studies of MLG have focused on economic development and the role of structural funds at the EU level (Jeffery, 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Schultze, 2003) and on economic development in the UK (Bachtler and Taylor, 2003; Goodwin et al., 2006; Peters and Pierre, 2004), neglecting the arena of environmental governance (Bulkeley, 2005). However, as was recognized by policy-makers at Agenda 21, local concerns may involve addressing local economic development, which under its broader remit is a dimension of urban sustainability (UNCED, 1992). In other words, one could argue that the MLG concept is appropriate for analysing CTCC because studies of MLG have focussed on sustainable development as economic development is part of this. To further support the argument that MLG is appropriate for analysis of CTCC, Bulkeley (2005) draws on Gibbs and Jonas (2000) to explain that within the UK domestic arena, the rescaling has allowed for environmental responsibilities to be decentralized to local authorities. This is illustrated through LA 21 – albeit the extent to which she thinks this works is moot. The point is that despite the critiques, the rescaling debates and MLG framework are useful and relevant to draw

upon for understanding the political opportunity of CTCC and empirical analysis of CTCC. It allows CTCC to be thought of as multi-level, even if the understanding within the MLG debates about how cities link-up through horizontal governance processes is not aptly discussed. The other way that the governance change is viewed is by drawing on the shift from government to governance as networks debates. This gives greater recognition to sub-national actors in self-organizational approaches in governing through horizontal networks, and is discussed in the next section.

2.1.3 Exploring the Shift from Government to Governance (As Networks)

This section discusses two key changes in the purported shift from government to governance that are useful for understanding the emergence of CTCC. First is the idea that there has been an emergence of governance as networks in society that are to various extents self-organizing or self-governing (Jessop, 1999; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1996, 1997; Stoker, 1998). As Rhodes (1997) notes: 'at is simplest, self-organizing means that a network is autonomous and self-governing' (Rhodes, 1997, p. 52). Thus, whilst the 'hollowing out thesis' (Rhodes, 1997) has drawn attention to the political opportunity of networks (Section 2.1.1), this section discusses in greater detail how the purported shifts in the nature of governance have allowed for networks to be self-organizational; and the implications of this for CTCC. The policy networks (Borzel, 1998; Marsh 1998a, 1998b; Rhodes, 1997), and governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, 2007b) literatures draw on ideas of self-governing to conceptualize how networks govern (Sections 2.2 and 2.3). Schout and Jordan (2005) provide a useful definition of self-organizational networks:

> In the context of European networks, self-organization – or self-steering – can be defined as a process through which actors involved identify their mutual inter-dependence, formulate and implement shared strategies (which involves gathering and analysing information, setting priorities and solving problems), and building organizational structures at network and actor level (Schout and Jordan, 2005, p. 202).

The above definition is not intended for explaining sub-national and city networks as it concerns how actors within member states at the national level can be involved in

policy-making processes and outcomes of the EU. Nevertheless, the notion of self-organizational networks at the sub-national level is that they have considerable autonomy from the EU/nation state so that 'society actually does more self-steering rather than depending upon guidance from government' (Peters, 2000, p. 36). Thus, the above definition by Schout and Jordan (2005) is useful for considering how city networks can govern. The self-steering concept, for example, gives recognition to some key issues about how sub-national networks are suggested to govern, namely, the idea that sub-national actors: (a) have shared common aims and objectives, and have the ability to define these and their own 'rules of the game' by which to function (Benz and Furst, 2002; Jessop, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; O'Toole Jr, 2007; Scharpf, 1997); and (b) have the capabilities to mobilize their own resources to implement policy on the ground (Bulkeley, 2004; Fleurke and Willemse, 2006; Hooghe and Marks 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Peters and Pierre 2001; Scharpf 1997). Furthermore, there is an inter-dependency of resources between stakeholders (Borzel, 1998; Jessop, 2003; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996; Stoker, 1998). As Rhodes (1996) notes, there are 'continuing interactions between network members, caused by the need to exchange resources and negotiate shared purposes' (Rhodes, 1996, p. 660).

Furthermore, it is over the last decade that 'trust' and the development of inter-personal relationships is seen by some governance networks scholars (Borzel, 1998; Jessop, 2003; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner et al., 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) as being the 'glue' that holds actors within networks together – the co-ordination mechanism of networks – and that allows for successful co-operation between actors to take place (Section 2.2.2). Rhodes (1996) notes that governance as networks are characterized by 'game-like interactions, rooted in trust and regulated by rules of the game negotiated and agreed by network participants' (Rhodes, 1996, p. 660). Whilst concepts of self-organizational networks are vague in the literature as to how they function, and how self-governance exists in policy (Kooiman, 2003; Rhodes, 1997; Schout and Jordan, 2005; Stoker, 1998) CTCC offers a means to understand how local authority networks and partnerships can self-steer. The notion of self-organizational networks can be drawn upon to analyse the processes of CTCC – for example, if local authorities have the capacity to establish the 'rules of the game', and to mobilize their own resources. The implication of self-organizational networks for CTCC is that local authorities have

autonomy from the EU/state to be innovative in shaping local policy-making and its outcomes. They have the resources and competence to co-operate with other authorities in learning processes to develop and implement locally innovative policies and strategies. Nevertheless, as Chapters Five and Six illustrate, this does not mean that all city networks are self-organizational in the sense that is portrayed by the definition provided by Shout and Jordan (2005) at the start of this section. This is because networks may only be self-regulating or self-governing to a certain extent (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Section 2.2). In summary, networks are an empirical phenomenon that can be examined through conceptions of self-organizational approaches to governing to help understand how they function.

Self-organizational networks are identified in the literature as: Interurban networks (Leitner and Sheppard, 2002); Intergovernmental (Rhodes, 1997; Ward and Williams, 1997); and Transnational (Bennington and Harvey, 1998; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002). The terms are often used interchangeably, but all concern the main governing processes associated with self-organizational networks. For example, networks are used to share knowledge, develop learning and innovation, transfer and implement policy, and govern through supra-national funding mechanisms. Furthermore, networks have the potential to act as the driving force of change through developing policy initiatives, and influencing policy outcomes, rather than adapting to policies pioneered by the European Commission or central government. Thus, scholars and policy-makers generally see the development and organization of self-organizational networks to be undertaken on a voluntary co-operative basis by the sub-national actors themselves (Bulkeley, 2004; CEC, 2001c; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Schout and Jordan, 2005; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a). As Sørensen and Torfing note, 'participation is voluntary and the actors are free to leave the network' (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, p. 10). The EU's White Paper on Governance (CEC, 2001c) gives a prominent role to sub-national public and private actors in self-organizational networks as a new mode of governing. The European Commission 'emphasizes the need for a stronger culture of voluntary cooperation' (Schout and Jordan, 2005, p. 207) through self-organizational networks. This should be guided by non-binding targets rather than formal sanctions, should involve the participation and the mobilization of resources by the sub-national actors themselves, and their inclusion in defining and implementing public policy (CEC, 2001c; Eising and Kohler-Koch, 1999b; Kohler-Koch, 2002; Sbragia, 2000). There are

a number of reasons why the European Commission encourages these networks – notably that they are a means through which to co-ordinate actors to implement public policy because it does not have the resources to deliver this itself. Furthermore, where public resources are used in policy delivery, they will be used more effectively by sub-national actors by increasing local responsiveness to local needs and concerns. Moreover, the European Commission can increase legitimacy through greater public participation in decision-making (Brenner, 2004; Faribrass, 2006; Jordan et al., 2003; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Rhodes, 1998; Schout and Jordan, 2005; Sorenson and Torfing, 2007).

The above discussions suggest that the European Commission has some kind of co-ordinating role over networks, and this point is returned to in Section 2.1.4 where an alternative narrative to governing in the EU is discussed. Nevertheless, because of the observation of the empirical phenomenon by scholars that there are a number of transnational networks emerging and spreading, an academic debate emerged in the late 1990s that stated that the EU should no longer be looked upon as a federal state – rather, it is one of the voluntary self-organizational network approaches to governing. This paradigm shift means that the EU is no longer seen to be the driver of integration through directives and legislation, as in a top down bureaucratic governance model. Rather, arguments were made by scholars that it should be considered as a 'network organisation' (Sbragia, 2000, p. 220), a 'new form of governance' (Bulkeley et al., 2003; Leitner et al., 2002; Rhodes, 1997), or a 'network governance state' (Eising and Kohler-Koch, 1999b, p. 275). Within a UK context, the substantive chapters highlight how there is also mandatory forms of governing through networks. Central government legislation relating to the modernisation agenda and the modernising of local government (Chapter Four) means that benchmarking exercises take place between local authorities as a means to continuously improve their delivery of local services. Benchmarking is an emerging mandatory mechanism of facilitating CTCC, and a key conduit through which PL/PT takes place. It has generally been overlooked by the self-organizational networks literature – therefore it is explored further in Chapter Five. As attention has been drawn to mandatory self-organizational networks, this suggests that voluntary association may not be the main or only driver behind the development and diffusion of self-organizational networks and CTCC.

The second key change in the purported shift from government to governance that is useful for understanding the emergence of CTCC is that this draws attention to the broader changing role of local authorities from service providers to leaders – for example in preparing and implementing the new structures of (local) governance in their communities (Bulkeley, 2004; DETR, 2000; Raco et al., 2006). The leadership role local authorities have in developing and overseeing the development of Sustainable Community Strategies which creates new networks between the public and private sectors is an illustration. An implication of the leadership role for local authorities is that it may be difficult to distinguish local authority networks and partnerships from public-private ones, because of the blurring of these boundaries. However, it has also meant that specific institutional forms of local authority networks and partnerships have a significant role in the political landscape. In other words, CTCC can be explained by the rise and spread of public actor networks that are distinct from those involving private and public ones. As can be seen through empirical documentation, CTCC has an important role to play in environmental governance practices. For example, Agenda 21 and more specifically Local Agenda 21 (LA 21) policies place particular emphasis on PL/PT and the use of good/best practice between local authorities (UNCED, 1992) (Chapter Four). However, the actual processes of how governing takes place between cities through LA 21 is unclear from the governance literature and policy documents that promote it (e.g. Begin, 2004; DETR, 1998a; Lafferty, 2001; UNCED, 1992; Young, 2000, 1998). Beyond the concept of LA 21 some Trans-Municipal Networks (TMNs) have developed to focus on issues of environmental sustainability (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley et al., 2003; Bulkeley, 2005)[4]. TMNs are:

> Networks of municipalities which operate nationally and transnationally, so that TMNs represent and involve cities directly in policy issues at the international and European levels, and across national borders (Bulkeley et al., 2003, p. 236).

[4] Examples include: ICLEI as a worldwide association that has four hundred local authorities as members involved in sustainable development – approximately 170 of these are based in Europe; the Climate Alliance which was founded in 1990 and has over one thousand members in Europe (Bulkeley et al., 2003) and the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) programme which involves more than 800 local authorities that have an interest in encouraging local initiatives to address mitigation of climate change (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004).

Whilst TMNs are not self-organizing as they can be dependent on European funding programmes, their presence highlights the importance of governing through local authority networks to address sustainable development objectives in the EU. The arguments in this section have drawn attention to the emergence of self-organizational networks. This has provided the political opportunity for the diffusion of CTCC, for example, because of the leadership role that local authorities have in governing local communities. Local authority institutions are encouraged through the development of LA 21 strategies, for example, to forge links with each other as a means to share ideas and experiences about how to take forward sustainable development initiatives in their respective administrative boundaries. The next section argues that for all the emphasis on self-organizational networks in the governance debates, the role of hierarchy and the state cannot be ignored – there is a plurality of governing that can undermine the self-organizational networks concept.

2.1.4 Meta-Governance and Hierarchy

The main argument in this section is that the political landscape involves a plurality (hierarchy, meta-governance, and networks) of governance and governing[5]. In other words, the 'hollowing out of the state' (Rhodes, 1997) and the shift from government to governance debates do not suffice on their own in explaining the political landscape, but the role of meta-governance and hierarchy does. This is because networks are not the only mode of governance – it is an alternative mode that is used in some situations, but in others there is a role for other modes of governance such as hierarchy (Chapter Six) as an empirical phenomenon. Thus, the state still has an important and powerful role in the political landscape. Furthermore, the plurality of governance/governing is prevalent because hierarchies and networks are controlled by a meta-governor. Developed by Jessop (1997), meta-governance is widely understood as 'the government of governance' (Whitehead, 2007, p. 4). Jessop (2002) and Whitehead (2003b) argue that meta-governance is a 'hybrid' form of governance between hierarchy and networks that overcomes the divide that has been constructed between government and governance.

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[5] The role of markets as a plurality of governance should not be excluded from the governance debates, but has been here to allow for the main arguments concerning the impact of hierarchy and meta-governance on networks to flow.

However, it is not clear from the governance literature as to exactly how meta-governance works (Jessop, 2002; Kooiman, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a), or what or whom the meta-governor is - for example, whether the meta-governor is the structure (Kooiman, 2003), an institution or actor's outside of the network (Kelly, 2006), institutions or actor's within the network (Whitehead, 2007), or practices and procedures of governing (Jessop, 2000; Whitehead, 2003b). In short, different scholars have alternative views as to whether meta-governance is about specific meta-governors or is a process. Nevertheless, scholars that study self-organizational networks explain that as networks involve a complex interaction of stakeholders there is a need for meta-governance as a means of co-ordination to 'avoid governance failure and the rise of private interest government that escapes public scrutiny' (Borzel, 1998; Jessop, 2002; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, p. 1; Whitehead, 2003b).

Jessop developed the meta-governance concept based on the notion that non-hierarchical forms of governance always take place within the 'shadow of hierarchy' (Jessop, 1997). In turn Jessop (1997) notes the 'shadow of hierarchy' was conceptualized by Scharpf (1994, 1997)[6]. Jessop (1997) explains that the 'shadow of hierarchy' is applicable to self-organizational networks because the supra-national institution or national state has the power to over-ride decision-making preferences of sub-national actors 'if the attempt to reach a negotiated agreement should fail' (Scharpf, 1997, p. 47). Furthermore, because hierarchies are controlled by a meta-governor, there is always the 'shadow of hierarchy' in meta-governance (Radcliffe and Dent, 2005; Sørensen and Torfing; 2005). In other words, meta-governance is the 'shadow of hierarchy' or 'shadow of the state'. Therefore, meta-governance always features in networks because they only regulate themselves to a certain extent (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003). The implications as to the 'power over' that governing through the 'shadow of hierarchy' means, is that networks will be disbanded or deprived of their influence by the meta-governor if they do not deliver on their outcomes in governing through responsible self-regulation. Chapter Six empirically documents how the meta-governor can implement direct hierarchical action to develop and facilitate the

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[6] The work on the 'shadow of hierarchy' by Scharpf (1994, 1997) has been primarily concerned with how the state controls and steers market governance through the casting of an institutional shadow over the market economy – for example, it recognises that the state sets taxes or regulations to encourage business investment. Central government sets the rules of the game for competition and intervenes to prevent both market distortion and outcomes that are not in the public interests.

governing of networks for the purpose of addressing nationally concerned sustainable development objectives.

Whilst meta-governance structures are used to implement hierarchical control, there is more to meta-governance than governing through a 'shadow of hierarchy' and over-riding decision-making preferences by actors in networks. Sub-national actors in networks, for example, also undertake policy learning and project working which means that negotiation with a supra-national or national state actor is not a requirement of the governing process. This suggests that some governing takes place outside the structures of 'meta-governance'. However, policy learning and project working may take place within the structures of meta-governance because its role is suggested by scholars to be about a hands-off approach to governing (Jessop, 2002; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005; Whitehead, 2007). Meta-governance is about the regulation of networks that does not impede on their ability for self-regulation – thus, meta-governance is not hierarchical governance as it facilitates the capacities for networks to self govern, rather than intervention in governing the network (Jessop, 2002; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005; Whitehead, 2007).

Meta-governance concerns the ways in which government can secure its influence, control, order, and power within hierarchy, market, and network governance political systems (Jessop, 1998; Koppenjan and Klijn 2004; Whitehead, 2003b). It is a means of controlling the structure and purpose of the network, and the role and types of actors within this, through regulations, laws, funding, political goals and objectives (Sørensen and Torfing, 2005; Vabo, 2005). In understanding the meta-governor as a structure of the network, control is through the norms and shared values that actors have in working to agreed goals. Thus, as Kooiman notes:

> In meta governance norms and criteria are advanced according to which existing practices are evaluated, new directions suggested, existing goals examined and new ones formulated and pursued (Kooiman, 2003, p. 171).

In summary, meta-governance: 'is conducted through the structure of network relations, the process of consensus building and the outcomes of joint problem solving' (Kelly, 2006, p. 606). In defining meta-governance, Jessop (2000; 2003) gives greater attention to the role of the state as the meta-governor. Through practices and procedures of

governing, central governments 'play a major and increasing role in meta-governance' (Jessop, 2000, p. 23). In this way, Jessop suggests meta-governance is about how governments can force the negotiation process to favour their policy outcomes through the shadow of the state: 'it is the explicit focus on the negotiated links, which are forged and contested between government and governance' (Whitehead, 2003b, p. 8). As Kelly (2006) usefully explains, this concerns:

> How the state retains the capacity for coordination of social action. It does this by mixing market, hierarchy and networks through vertical hierarchical arrangements across formal government institutions, by new governance arrangements and through civil society institutions, which operate in order to manage political and economic arrangements (Kelly, 2006, p. 606).

Kelly (2006) and Whitehead (2003b) note that the meta-governor can be an institution, or actors within these outside of the network. For example, at the national level, Kelly (2006, p. 603) argues that the Audit Commission is a 'vehicle of meta-governance' because it guides, steers and regulates local authorities performance. Similarly, at the regional level, Whitehead (2003b) explains that in the case of Single Regeneration Budget programmes, regional Government Offices fund a range of partnerships involving local authorities, the private and voluntary sector. As such, the meta-governor provides expertise and recommendations, develops benchmarks, monitors progress, and encourages actors to work together towards shared common objectives. However, meta-governance can border on hierarchy as it can take place through the 'mobilization of hierarchical power' (Kelly, 2006, p. 605) (Section 6.1). For example, the European Commission promotes networks between cities through conditional structural funds, and monitors these networks to ensure compliance (Jeffery, 2000; John, 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marks et al., 2002). This explains why there are contentions in the literature as to whether the EU should be viewed as a network governance system, or whether it exhibits traits of both a federal and a network governance system (Jessop, 2005; Jordan, 2001; Richardson, 2000; Sbragia, 2000; Schout and Jordan, 2005) (Section 2.1.3). These scholars recognize that networks are the most common form of organization used by the European Commission, but they are not the only one because the Commission and member states are still predominant.

The implications of the role of the meta-governor for understanding CTCC is that self-organizational networks are not as autonomous as some governance scholars (e.g. Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Leitner et al., 2002; Peters, 2000; Rhodes, 1996; 1997 - compare Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) would suggest. Rhodes (1996), for example, has argued that networks have:

> ... a significant degree of autonomy from the state. Networks are not accountable to the state; they are self-organizing. Although the state does not occupy a privileged, sovereign position, it can indirectly and imperfectly steer networks (Rhodes, 1996, p. 660).

The point is that the emergence and spread of networks may have less to with voluntary modes of self-governing and the idea that local authorities can be more responsive to local needs and priorities. Rather, it may have more to do with control from supra-national institutions, and nation state. For example, central government has not lost its power in the reconfiguration of space and scales – as in the 'hollowing out of the state' thesis (Rhodes, 1997) – as it still wields considerable power as meta-governor over the networks and partnerships that govern within them (Jessop, 1998; Koppenjan and Klijn 2004; Whitehead, 2003b). The state still has power because of the resources it holds – influence, money, legitimacy, information/knowledge, access, contacts, and expertise (Section 2.3) – to govern society. These resources are used to develop, control, and monitor networks and partnerships. In other words, central government still has an influential role in the political landscape as it has a 'hands off' meta-governance approach to governing over self-organizational networks, but this can border on hierarchy. A number of scholars (Cox, 1998; Davies, 2002; Imrie and Raco, 2000; John, 2000; MacLeod et al., 2003; Marks et al., 1996; Morgan, 2007; Peck, 2002; Pierre and Peters 2000; Rhodes, 2000) note that governance is not so much about marginalisation of government but rather a change in its role, style, and use of instruments. The state co-ordinates and guides the delivery of services that is undertaken by sub-national actors in networks through a 'hands-off' (meta-governing) 'steering' role rather than a 'rowing' one that involves direct intervention and involvement in policy delivery (Rhodes, 1997). Thus, the state plays a very significant institutional regulatory role in the political landscape:

> National states do not simply filter global forces into a territorial economy but actively produce, reproduce and continually reshape the institutional-regulatory landscapes within which contemporary processes of global, national and local restructuring are being articulated (Swyngedouw, 1997; Brenner, 1998) (Brenner, 2003, p. 318).

The state is both influenced by and influences the local and global processes that are concurrently emerging above and beneath it (e.g. self-organizational networks). Nevertheless, the literature that discusses meta-governance (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, 2007b; Whitehead, 2003b) struggles to come to terms with how meta-governance through the European Commission and/or the state encourages and threatens the autonomy of local network structures. This is because of the confusion as to the extent to which meta-governing as a concept and empirical phenomenon constrains or enables actors within networks to have autonomy to self-govern (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, 2007b; Whitehead, 2003b):

> ... it is possible to see how the rigidities of governmental power are choking and constraining the flexibilities that are conventionally associated with self-organizational networks (Whitehead, 2003b, p. 13).

As an empirical example, because TMNs can be dependent on structural funds to operate, there are still questions about how and why they govern - they require further conceptual and empirical investigation (Bulkeley et al., 2003; Kern and Bulkeley, 2008). This can explain why Jordan et al., (2005), Kooiman (2003), and Schout and Jordan (2005) argue that the empirical evidence to support the notion that the emergence and spread of network governance is a new mode of self-organizational governing replacing traditional forms of government is limited. They argue that not only is there no universally accepted definition as to what governance is within which to situate empirical evidence, but society and networks require some kind of steering, control or monitoring role to co-ordinate from the centre (i.e. central government or a supranational institution). Whilst they do not refer to the terminology, Jordan et al., (2005) and Schout and Jordan (2005) are referring to the requirement of a meta-governor.

In taking into consideration the border-line between hierarchy and meta-governance, it is argued in this thesis that how meta-governance should be perceived by governance scholars is an open question for three reasons. First, scales are connected through the actors, institutions, and resources that permeate them. As highlighted earlier in this section however, it is not clear from the meta-governance literature as to exactly how meta-governance works, or what or whom the meta-governor is. As an empirical phenomenon, the literature (e.g. Kelly, 2006; Whitehead, 2003b) draws attention to the role of actors and institutions in a meta-governing role outside of the network. In support of these points, Chapters Five and Six show how the meta-governor can be an actor that has the legitimacy of power (influence, money) within a central government department to facilitate and control local authority networks and partnerships.

Second how meta-governance should be perceived by governance scholars is an open question because this may depend on the scale at which meta-governance takes place. For example, the meta-governing role can take place through horizontal co-ordination at the local scale of governance, as well as by national and supra-national institutions. Local authorities can have a meta-governing leadership role in public-private partnerships (internal-meta-governor), as the private part is accountable to the local authority side (Whitehead, 2007). In other words, the network is developed, controlled, and monitored by actors based within the institutions of the network rather than from within an external institution that oversees the network. Therefore, through the internal-meta-governing role, the links and processes of engagement between actors are more likely to be more hands-on, entwined. Third, how the meta-governor should be perceived by governance scholars can depend on the governance processes within CTCC taking place. Chapters Five and Six, for example, illustrate that local authority networks are likely to be relatively free of a meta-governor where they are mobilizing their own resources to be voluntarily involved in policy learning, in comparison to where they are involved in structural fund programmes.

This section has highlighted the prominence and significance of meta-governance as an empirical phenomenon that impacts upon networks. However, another important point/governance debate relating to meta-governance is that this can fail (Jessop, 2002; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, 2007b) (Chapter Six). Because of the influential role of the state on these scaling and rescaling processes that offer political opportunity for

CTCC, the political landscape can be a governance space of conflict, competition, and tensions. This can hinder concepts of co-operation associated with self-organizational networks rather than enable it (Brenner, 2001; Jessop, 2002; Swyngedouw, 2000; Whitehead, 2003b). This is because there are difficulties in regulating the complexities of networks and actors, and meta-governance weakens the horizontal co-ordination and co-operation that networks governance is based upon, albeit that the purpose of meta-governance is to co-ordinate the complex range of actors to avoid governance failure. It has emerged from the arguments in this section that a central concept of the governance debate concerns understanding who or what steers society (Peters, 2000; Schout and Jordan 2005), for example, the state, the EU, or the networks themselves. Recognition of this point is important for conceptualizing and analysing CTCC, and it is taken into consideration in the empirical chapters Four, Five, and Six where the potential for local authority networks and partnerships to have the autonomy to address local needs and concerns are discussed. With these considerations in mind the next section discusses how CTCC as a form of self-organizing networks and partnerships can be conceptualized and examined within the governance debates.

2.2 The Processes of Governing Through Networks

A range of conceptual terms have developed to analyze the nature of self-organizational networks in the EU and the UK, including: 'network governance', 'policy networks' and 'governance networks' (Eising and Kohler-Koch, 1999b; Kohler-Koch, 2002; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996; Sbragia, 2000; Stoker, 1998). Klijn and Skelcher (2007) draw on the work of Pierre and Peters (2000) and Koppenjan and Klijn (2004) to explain that network governance is a term generally used at the macro-level to describe 'a particular mode of societal organization' (Klijn and Skelcher, 2007, p. 587). Therefore, analysis of policy-making and policy implementation is usually compared to hierarchical and market modes of governing. Network governance is a term used to describe the accumulation of policy networks (and governance networks) that make up the broader network concept as a mode of governance and alternative form of social organisation. Policy networks in contrast are a lower level concept and are a specific form of governance. The approach to analysis of policy networks concerns describing and analysing the web of tangible relationships of actors from and between government,

business, and civil society in understanding public policy-making and its implementation (Klijn and Skelcher, 2007). As Eising and Kohler-Koch explain:

> ... the setting of policy-making is defined by the existence of highly organized social sub-systems (of policy networks) (Eising and Kohler-Koch, 1999a, p. 5).

An argument of this section is that local authority networks and partnerships are a specific form of governance and process of governing rather than a higher level mode of governance that is associated with concepts of network governance. This section draws on theoretical conceptions of policy networks and governance networks to explore how they can be used to capture the internal dynamics and processes of CTCC, and taken forward to analyze interaction between local authorities in the substantive chapters. However, because policy networks and governance networks draw attention to public-private networks/partnerships, some clarification is required as to how they can be used to explain what is known about CTCC (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley et al., 2003; Bulkeley, 2004; Kern and Bulkeley, 2008). The opportunities and constraints as to the role of policy networks and governance networks for conceptualizing CTCC are discussed in turn.

2.2.1 Policy Networks

Prior to the 1980s, the term policy networks' has been used to describe the role and interaction of central government institutions or departments and their involvement in service delivery through the welfare system. For example, the education, transport, and fire services (Rhodes, 1997). Into the 1980s and 1990s Rhodes (1997) suggests that understandings of policy networks changed to include to varying extents both public and private actors from the different tiers of governance and policy areas in the delivery of public services:

> Policy networks changed after 1979. Functional policy networks based on central government departments (or sections of them) expanded to include more actors, most notably from the private and voluntary sectors. The institutions of the state were fragmented . . . fragmentation not only created

> new networks but it also increased the membership of existing networks ... networks became common (Rhodes, 1997, p. 45).

A key point to note concerning the emergence and spread of policy networks as an implication for CTCC is that this does not mean there is a role for local authorities in these. As Rhodes (1997) goes on to note, membership in policy networks effectively by-passed local governments in the reconfiguration of the states roles and responsibilities:

> British government creates agencies, bypasses local government, uses special-purpose bodies to deliver services, and encourages public-private partnerships, so networks become increasingly prominent among British governing structures (Rhodes, 1997, p. 51).

Nevertheless, since the 1990s the importance of local government has been recognized in some of the literature on policy networks:

> Policy network analytical tools are now used not only to study national policies but increasingly at the local and regional level too, as growing interdependence among levels of government tends to become a general feature (Le Galès, 2001, p. 167).

Local authorities are recognized by scholars as being important in governance because of their role in: government funded public-private urban initiatives such as City Challenge and the Single Regeneration Budget whereby local authority and private actors work together through networks and partnerships to deliver public services (John and Cole, 2000); as institutions to revive local representation; and because local authorities have been tasked with being leaders of local communities (John and Cole, 2000) in 'local policy networks' (Le Galès, 2001, p. 167):

> Local government is far from marginalised in the new community governance. Elected local government takes a key role in policy networks in Southampton and Leeds. In Leeds, local government was at the centre of the networks and was the agency that makes things happen in the city (John and Cole, 2000, p. 77).

> Urban government officials have learned to co-operate, to provide sources of funding and to incorporate different groups, including social movements, in a more loosely defined structure of governance (Mayer 2000), for instance policy networks and partnerships (Pierre 1998) (Le Galès, 2001 p. 167).

Thus, the recognition of the important role of local authorities in the political landscape in the policy networks literature has developed in tandem with understandings about the changing nature of the state and the shift from government to governance discussed in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.3 respectively. With the consideration that local authorities have had a role in the conceptualisation of policy networks since the 1990s, it is argued in this section that the notion of policy networks since the 1990s is a useful starting point for analysing the role of local authorities in CTCC. Policy networks offer the potential to analyse the role of sub-national actors in governance, and draw attention to the role of local authorities as a governing actor. However, policy networks are debated in the literature because of the deliberations as to what actually constitutes a policy network (Borzel, 1998; Bulkeley, 2004; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Marsh, 1998a, 1998b; Rhodes, 1997 gives a good account). As Borzel (1998, p. 254) notes: 'often, authors have only a vague and sometimes ambiguous idea of what a policy network is and hardly make it explicit'. Borzel (1998) usefully points out that despite disputes as to what a policy network is, there is general agreement that it involves:

> ... a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests acknowledging that co-operation is the best way to achieve common goals (Borzel 1998, p. 254).

The British authors Marsh and Rhodes (1992) and Marsh (1998a, 1998b) see policy networks as an interest group representation, and the role actors play in the development of specific policies (Damgaard, 2006). Policy networks are seen by them 'as a generic term for different forms of relationships between interest groups and the state (Borzel, 1998, p. 255). Analysis focuses on the striking of bargains between groups of actors and how they influence policy outcomes, rather than as a form of co-operation and governance (Bulkeley, 2004). The interest intermediation approach to policy networks

draws attention to the lobbying role of networks, which is significant in the context of CTCC. Attention is given to the vertical relationships and resource-dependencies of sub-national actors as they compete with each other for resources from central government:

> Policy networks are generally regarded as an analytical tool for examining institutionalized exchange relations between the state and organizations of civil society, allowing a more 'fine grain' analysis by taking into account sectoral and sub-sectoral differences, the role played by private and public actors, and formal as well as informal relationships between them (Borzel, 1998, p. 258).

As an analytical tool, policy networks analyse how the structure of the network and policy outcomes are influenced by endogenous factors such as resource interdependencies and exogenous change (i.e. economic factors, political influence, ideological shifts, new knowledge, institutional restructuring) (Borzel, 1998; Bulkeley, 2004; Coleman and Perl, 1999; Marsh, 1998a; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992). Exogenous change is suggested to in turn affect the power and resources of different actors (Bulkeley, 2004). This matters because exploring the exogenous factors can help to explain the reasons for the emergence of CTCC, for example, because of political influence through legislation (Chapter Five).

In contrast to interest intermediation, some scholars in Europe (for example, Kooiman, 2003), and those associated with the Max-Planck Institute in Berlin, Germany (for example, Renate Mayntz and Fritz Scharpf) (Scharpf, 1997), have drawn attention to policy networks as 'a specific form of governance' (Borzel, 1998, p. 255). Policy networks 'characterize a specific form of public-private interaction in public policy (governance), namely the one based on non-hierarchical co-ordination' (Borzel, 1998, p 255). A policy network 'includes all actors involved in the formulation and implementation of a policy in a policy sector' (Borzel, 1998, p. 260). Thus, whilst policy networks can be used to describe a change in governance at a broader level, in terms of analysis they also concern individual networks that involve public and private actors in decision-making and governing processes to achieve learning outcomes (Damgaard, 2006). Private organizations contribute their resources not to compete and

bargain but to use constructively in conjunction with sub-national and central government to address shared common public policy outcomes. Policy networks is a concept that explores how the state shares its powers with sub-national independent actors so that they can exchange knowledge and develop learning and innovation. Thus, in the European school attention is drawn to policy learning and policy transfer (PL/PT), rather than interest intermediation and lobbying which is associated with the British school.

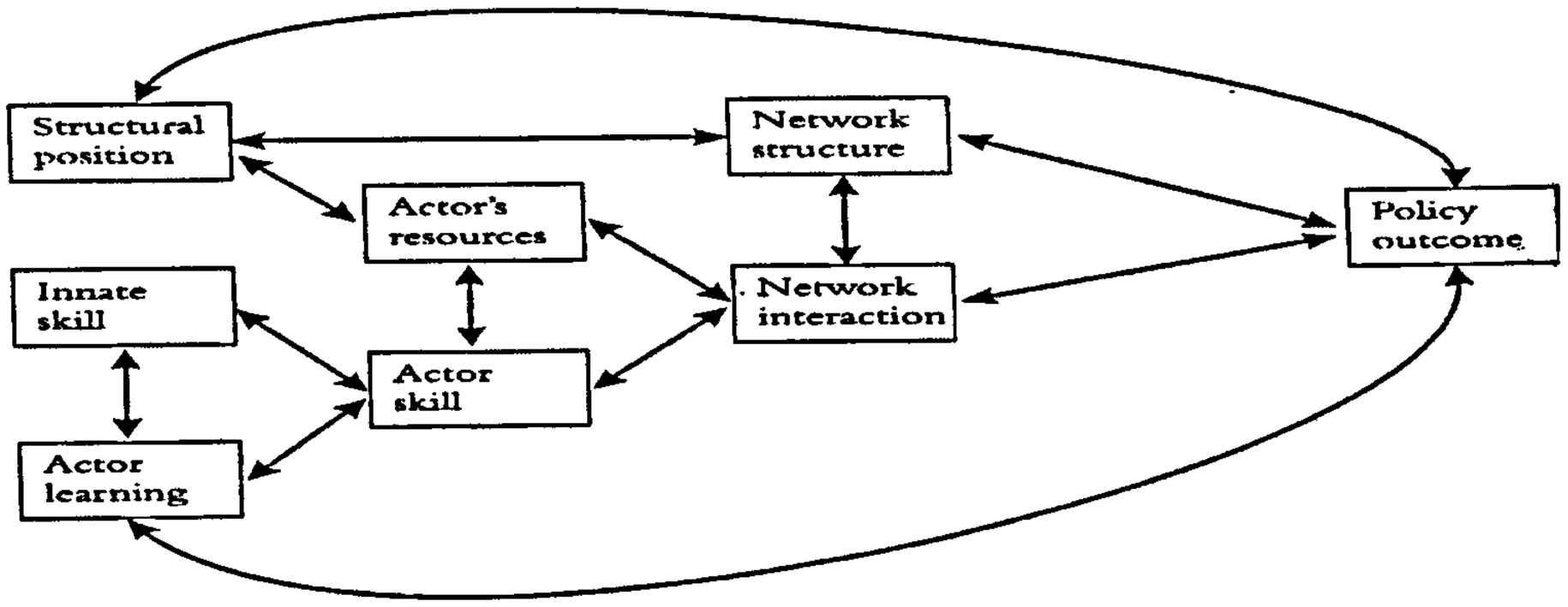
The European school understanding of policy networks is also significant for CTCC, because learning is regarded as a reason for the emergence and diffusion of networks and is a governing process. Whilst policy outcomes will be influenced by bargaining, there is an increasing reliance upon trust, informality, horizontal co-operative relationships between public and private actors, and problem solving (Borzel, 1998; Bulkeley, 2004; Coleman and Perl, 1999; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003). In turn, this allows for stability that can enable collective decision-making to achieve shared common objectives relating to public policy. Whilst there are differences between the British and European schools of thought, there is an important similarity which makes the policy network concept a useful starting point for understanding the internal dynamics of CTCC. Both approaches note the dialectical relationship between the structure and the role of actors (inter-personal relationships) in the network, and how both variables can influence each other and impact upon policy outcomes (Borzel, 1998; Bulkeley, 2004; Marsh, 1998a, 1998b; Marsh and Smith, 2000) (Figure 2.1). The roles which actors play within networks are subject to the resources available to allow this to happen:

> Networks are seen as structuring the roles, responses and resources of actors, who in turn may have different views and values and who interpret and negotiate constraints or opportunities potentially leading to the restructuring of the network (Marsh and Smith 2000, p. 5-7).

However, the British School (interest intermediation) approach is not appropriate for understanding CTCC for three reasons. First, whilst the British school approach does consider that sub-national actors work with/assist government in policy-making and to shape policy in local contexts, there has not been a blurring of the boundaries between

state and non-state actors. Non-state actors are outside of the governance processes rather than being an integral part of this in co-operation with state actors to achieve governance outcomes.

Figure 2.1 The Importance of Actors and Structures in Policy Networks and Policy Outcomes



Source: Marsh (1998b, p. 194).

Second, the British school approach does not consider that sub-national actors have the resource dependency (autonomy) from central government to undertake governance processes. In contrast, the European School highlights that sub-national actors have the resource capabilities and autonomy from central government to self-govern. As Rhodes (1997) notes, policy networks 'resist government steering, develop their own policies and mould their environments' (Rhodes, 1997, p. 52). As an example, policy learning is undertaken by local authorities that are based on horizontal co-ordination and co-operation (Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Coleman and Perl, 1999; Dowding, 1995; Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Smith, 2003; Stone, 2004). Third, the emphasis of the British school is more on competition and bargaining between sub-national actors for central government resources and to influence policy-making and outcomes. The European school approach recognizes that co-operation and working to shared common objectives is the way forward to achieve governance outcomes, which may or may not involve co-operating with central government:

> Governments have become increasingly dependent upon the co-operation and joint resource mobilization of policy actors outside their hierarchical control (Borzel, 1998, p. 259-260).

The European School approach also acknowledges that realistically there will be bargaining arrangements and disagreements and tensions between actors. Although policy networks, seen as a specific form of governance, is a useful starting point and strategy for analysis of the essence of CTCC and capturing some of its processes, this also has its limitations. One of its main constraints is that 'the concept of policy networks as a specific form of governance does not constitute a proper theory' (Borzel, 1998, p. 263). This is because policy networks are theoretically under-developed and vague in how they are suggested to function (Borzel, 1998; Bulkeley, 2004; Coleman and Perl, 1999; Dowding, 1995). Furthermore, the concept of policy networks does not go beyond analysis of resource exchange and availability to examine politics and policy outcomes. They do not allow for analysis as to how actors can shape outcomes through co-operation based on values such as trust and shared ideals (Borzel, 1998; Bulkeley, 2004; Le Galès, 2001). Moreover, the emphasis on the collaboration between sub-national actors and central government in this approach means it is not clear how the lobbying role of local authorities is undertaken in approaching the state to influence policy-making and policy outcome.

Whilst these points are broader critiques, one of the main problems with policy network approaches for conceptualizing CTCC is that they draw attention away from specific public actor networks because they give recognition to public-private actor networks and partnerships. Coleman and Perl (1999), and Le Galès (2001) argue that policy networks can contain only public actors as they can be 'state directed' and 'state implemented' (Coleman and Perl, 1999, p. 697). However, it may well be that in some instances the term policy networks is used too loosely to describe co-operation between actors as it might not capture fully what public networks are about, for example, the role of politicians, bureaucrats, planners, policy officers, and regional officers within these. Thus, public networks will have different responsibilities and governance roles to policy networks, because local authorities have the powers and responsibilities of local governments (Bulkeley, et al., 2003). In summary, the policy networks literature recognises that networks as a specific form of governance is different from hierarchy. However, the notion of policy networks does not suffice in explaining how public networks govern and achieve governance. One way to develop and take forward these debates is though the concept of 'governance networks'. This is explored in the next section.

2.2.2 Governance Networks

First generation governance networks theorists (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992) have successfully raised awareness about the spread of, and the role of, networks as a specific form of governance through the conception of policy networks. More recent conceptual developments have been inspired by, and built on, the notion of policy networks to define governance networks (Jessop, 2000; Kooiman, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Pierre, 2000; Rhodes, 1997; Scharpf, 1994; Skelcher et al., 2006; Sørensen, 2002; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, 2007b) and 'partnership governance' (Jessop, 2002, p. 240; Cloke et al., 2000; Kooiman 2000) (i.e. public-private partnerships). These scholars are the 'second generation' (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, p. 16) of governance networks theorists. Second generation governance theorists explore more comprehensively the examination of the nature, role, functioning, form, self-steering, and democratic effects of networks (Skelcher et al., 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005, 2007a, 2007b). However, as Kern and Bulkeley (2008) and Skelcher et al., note, the second generation research is in an embryonic stage and as such, 'there is limited empirical evidence or theoretical explanations of these data' (Skelcher et al., 2006, p. 4).

This thesis contributes to the body of second generation research by using the notion of governance networks to inform debates about how self-organizational approaches to governing takes place through local authority networks and partnerships. Moreover, governance networks are useful for conceptualizing CTCC because the reasons as to why actors are involved in them have striking similarities with those of CTCC as they: identify policy problems and address them; gather and exchange information for political decision-making and address conflicts amongst actors through processes of negotiation (Sørensen and Torfing, 2003). Governance networks draw attention to a wider range of governing forms and processes than policy networks which mainly focus on PL/PT. Furthermore, because governance networks place emphasis on partnership working and delivering and implementing policy, they are more appropriate than policy networks for understanding the modernisation reforms in the UK that are associated with the network governance concept (Geedes, 2006; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999; Raco et al., 2006; Sullivan and Skelcher 2002; Walker et al., 2007; Whitehead, 2007).

The obvious distinction between a partnership and a network is that there may only be a connection and relationship between actors involved in two institutions (e.g. through

twin cities), rather than links and nodes between a greater number of institutions that the concept of networks portrays. Within this context, some scholars argue that there are striking similarities between the characteristics of networks and partnerships - 'the generation of complex policy networks is also often characterized by the valorization of 'partnership' (Cloke et al., 2000, p. 113). Stoker (1998) for example, recognizes that some partnerships can develop a level of 'mutual understanding and embeddedness to the extent that organizations develop a shared vision and joint working capacity' (Stoker, 1998, p. 22). However, partnerships are often associated in the governance literature with public-private partnerships (Jessop, 2002; Kooiman, 2000; Stoker, 1998).

This means that partnerships are not necessarily seen by all scholars to have the same self-organizational characteristics that networks do in governing. For example, the co-ordination mechanism of public-private partnerships is contracts – the private part of the partnership is accountable to the public body, and the private side is dependent on resources from the state. Thus, in these formal partnerships, there are lower levels of trust and negotiation than is found in governance networks (Rhodes, 1999; Stoker, 1998): 'autonomy is a condition of networking, trust and diplomacy but it is not a salient feature of local regeneration politics in Britain' (Davies, 2002, p 312). Public-private partnerships have a role in an examination of CTCC because some European funding programmes promote links between local authorities and the involvement of private actors. However, more broadly, there are a range of partnerships between local authorities (rather than public-private ones) that are explored in Chapters Four, Five, and Six that concerns self-organizational approaches to governing. Therefore, the characteristics of governance networks that are discussed below are applicable to exploring local authority partnerships as well.

Marcussen and Torfing have been at the forefront of developing second generation governance network theory. They note that 'governance networks represent a particular kind of governance and a particular kind of network':

> 1) a horizontal articulation of interdependent, but operationally autonomous actors; 2) who interact through negotiations; 3) transpiring within a regulative, normative, cognitive and imaginary framework; 4) that to a certain extent is self-regulating; and 5) which contribute to the production of public purpose within a particular area (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003, p. 7).

Marcussen and Torfing's first point in their governance networks definition recognises that actors can mobilize their own resources to pursue their own objectives. However, they also recognize that resources are not always shared, and negotiations are not always undertaken in taking forward projects. Within the context of CTCC this point is explored in Chapter Six. The second point in Marcussen's and Torfing's definition refers to the processes that allow for negotiation, understanding, learning and joint action. 'Trust' and the development of inter-personal relationships is seen as a co-ordination mechanism or the 'glue' that allows for successful co-operation between actors to take place (Borzel, 1998; Jessop, 2003; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner et al., 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003). Governance networks give considerably more theoretical attention to trust than policy networks as a means through which actors are held together in networks. Trust is seen to favour problem solving over bargaining as the dominant actor orientation. However, the governance networks literature shows that these concepts are not this clear-cut. For example, bargaining can be a healthy characteristic of the network that allows actors to disagree but work together through trust to address their differences through problem solving, and can allow for the exchange of ideas in developing new understandings (Bulkeley, 2004). As such, the negotiation process may involve:

> ...bargaining of threats, offers, bluffs, and pleas on the one hand; and the language of trust creation, building confidence in relationships between parties, on the other (Rydin, 2003, p. 61).

The reliance on the role of inter-personal relationships in allowing for the build up of trust (Jessop, 2003) that can allow for 'more demanding agreements to be reached' (Scharpf, 1997, p. 47), can ironically be its downfall. In other words, trust does not always operate in a rational order that can allow for successful governing within networks to take place (Chapter Six). The policy networks and governance networks literature suggests that rational actors are always seeking their own interests, to maximize their own benefits, and are fearful of others cheating (Borzel, 1998; Jessop, 2003; Scharpf, 1997). Moreover, power relations are not equal in horizontal networks because each actor has a different starting point in terms of resources, hence, bargaining power at the outset can be more or less successful (Damgaard, 2006; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003). Furthermore, the personality and ego of the actors can create problems

of co-ordination (Jessop, 2003; Scharpf, 1997), and competition compromises trust as networks compete for both financial reasons and to entice members (Benington and Harvey, 1998; Bulkeley et al., 2003; Jessop, 2003; Kratke, 2001; Leitner et al, 2002; Oatley, 1998a, 1998b). There can be further complications because the diversity of actors in the network means that there will be different languages, customs, values, and culture that can reduce trust between actors (Bennington and Harvey, 1998; Leitner et al., 2002). The above critiques raise important conceptual debates about the extent to which 'trust and negotiation' as the co-ordinating mechanism of governance networks operates as effectively as it should. Furthermore, there has to be a realistic acknowledgment that governance networks do fail (Borzel, 1998; Jessop; 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Loffler, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003). However, the policy networks and governance networks literature does not aptly explain what happens to co-operation when trust is not apparent or breaks down and how co-operation can then be reinstated – Chapter Six sheds some light on these issues.

The third point of Marcussen and Torfing's definition concerns how the institutionalised framework of the network defines the 'rules of the game' to allow for actors to deliver policy on the ground. The framework is based on rules, legislation, knowledge, identity, ideologies and shared visions (i.e. a regulative, normative, cognitive, and imaginary framework). For governance networks, the key way that negotiation takes place is through participant actors establishing the 'rules of the game' (Jessop, 2003) which are defined and re-defined as new knowledge is produced concerning a specific policy problem. For policy networks, the key way that negotiation is undertaken is considered to be in the quantity of resources held by actors within the network (Bulkeley, 2004; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003). As with policy networks, (analysis of) resources inter-dependencies are considered important to governance networks. However, the emphasis is more on establishing the 'rules of the game' (Jessop, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) and the '"need to get things done" collectively, as to what structures the network' (Bulkeley, 2004, p. 16). The idea that an institutionalised framework allows for governing within networks is useful for conceptualising CTCC because it takes into consideration the extent to which local authorities have the autonomy to develop their own legislation, rules and knowledge. Because the network actors define and redefine the 'rules of the game', actors have the capability of self-governing the network or partnership. Attention is given to the process of decision-

making which is neglected in the policy networks literature – governance networks can explore 'how individual actors respond to dilemmas and reinterpret and reconstruct traditions' (Bevir and Rhodes, 2007, p. 82; Bulkeley, 2004; Richardson, 2000). However, the governance networks debates have not sufficiently addressed how actor-based interaction takes place within networks and which processes are the most common or the most effective in allowing for successful governance to take place (e.g., formality, informality, workshops, seminars, meetings, and so forth) – Chapters Five and Six inform these debates.

Marcussen and Torfing's fourth point is that networks are only self-regulating to a certain extent. Note therefore, that governance networks give recognition to the self-organizational element in governing through networks because these have some autonomy to self-govern. Thus the governance networks concept is useful to draw upon for considering the self-organizing element of CTCC. Networks are only self-regulating to a certain extent because governance networks can be developed, controlled, and steered by an external meta-governor, for example, the European Commission or nation state can provide funding to networks not only to govern but also to carry out their own objectives (Section 2.3). To this end, governance networks draw attention to the contradictory nature of networks as both self-organized and externally influenced. However, governance networks do not suffice in explaining processes of interaction between the network and the meta-governor. Furthermore, governance networks do not consider the role of hierarchy as it does not take the state seriously enough as a major actor in the political landscape. The empirical material in Chapters Five and Six inform and shapes these debates on meta-governance and hierarchy. The fifth point is that co-operation between actors can only be considered as a governance network if it is addressing public policy. This point is appropriate to understanding CTCC because the thesis is investigating public networks/partnerships in relation to sustainable development in public policy.

In support of the main characteristics of governance networks, Marcussen and Torfing (2003) have also developed seven dimensions that concern their internal dynamics. These are useful for considering the empirical analysis and concern the spread and emergence of networks and partnerships: formality; origin; scope; duration; actors; sphere; and level. 'Formality' concerns the development of inter-personal relationships

in influencing negotiations and policy outcomes, and the impact of formal or informal meetings upon this. Whilst policy networks recognise that informality is an important part of negotiations (Borzel, 1998; Coleman and Perl, 1999), they do not delve into greater detail than this. 'Origin' concerns how networks are established, for example, their emergence due to legislation, funding incentives, or as a lobbying role. This is an important point that is considered in Chapter Four in an exploration of the emergence of CTCC. 'Scope' relates to whether the network is formulated for one common goal or is representative of a broader policy field, for example, sustainable development. 'Duration' refers to whether the network will survive after it has achieved its objective. This point concerns the extent to which the network can continue to govern through use of its own resources or is dependent on external resources (e.g. European Funds). 'Actors' relates to whether the individuals are representative of an organization or are acting on their own behalf. 'Sphere' recognizes that networks will not necessarily be homogonous because of the blurring of the boundaries in public policy because the private sector is increasingly involved in production of public policy (e.g. public-private partnerships). 'Level' explores whether decisions within the governance network are influenced by members at the local, national, or supranational level – it concerns issues of MLG and Meta-governance. The foresaid dimensions have been addressed directly or indirectly throughout this chapter. This reasserts their recognized importance in understanding the role and functioning of self-organizational networks and their potential importance for understanding how governance can take place through CTCC.

The governance networks concept is useful to draw upon when considering how networks govern – for example, the role of resources, trust and inter-personal relationships as important characteristics which variously constrain or enable networks to govern. However, for all its credentials, the governance networks approach is not the panacea to understanding how CTCC governs and takes place. The processes of interaction within networks are theoretically and empirically under-developed or absent in the governance networks literature (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Skelcher et al., 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005, 2007a). This in part reflects the embryonic stage of second generation governance networks. Thus, the subsequent substantive chapters inform debates on the governing processes of interaction in CTCC. Section 2.2 has identified the strengths and limitations of the policy networks and governance networks literature. The next section takes forward some of these key points to develop a

framework that can be used to examine the relative autonomy of self-organizational networks and discusses how this framework can be used for exploring the nature of CTCC in the substantive chapters.

2.3 Developing a Framework for Understanding CTCC

The theory as to how governing takes place through self-organizational networks, herby conceptualized as governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) is vague and under developed, and the empirical evidence in the governance literature that explores the processes of governing is limited (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Skelcher et al., 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005, 2007a). The academic literature does not grapple, for example, with ideas of power, and how actors interact. As Koppenjan notes:

> One of the criticisms of theories on policy networks and governance is the lack of attention devoted to power and conflict (Koppenjan, 2007, p. 133).

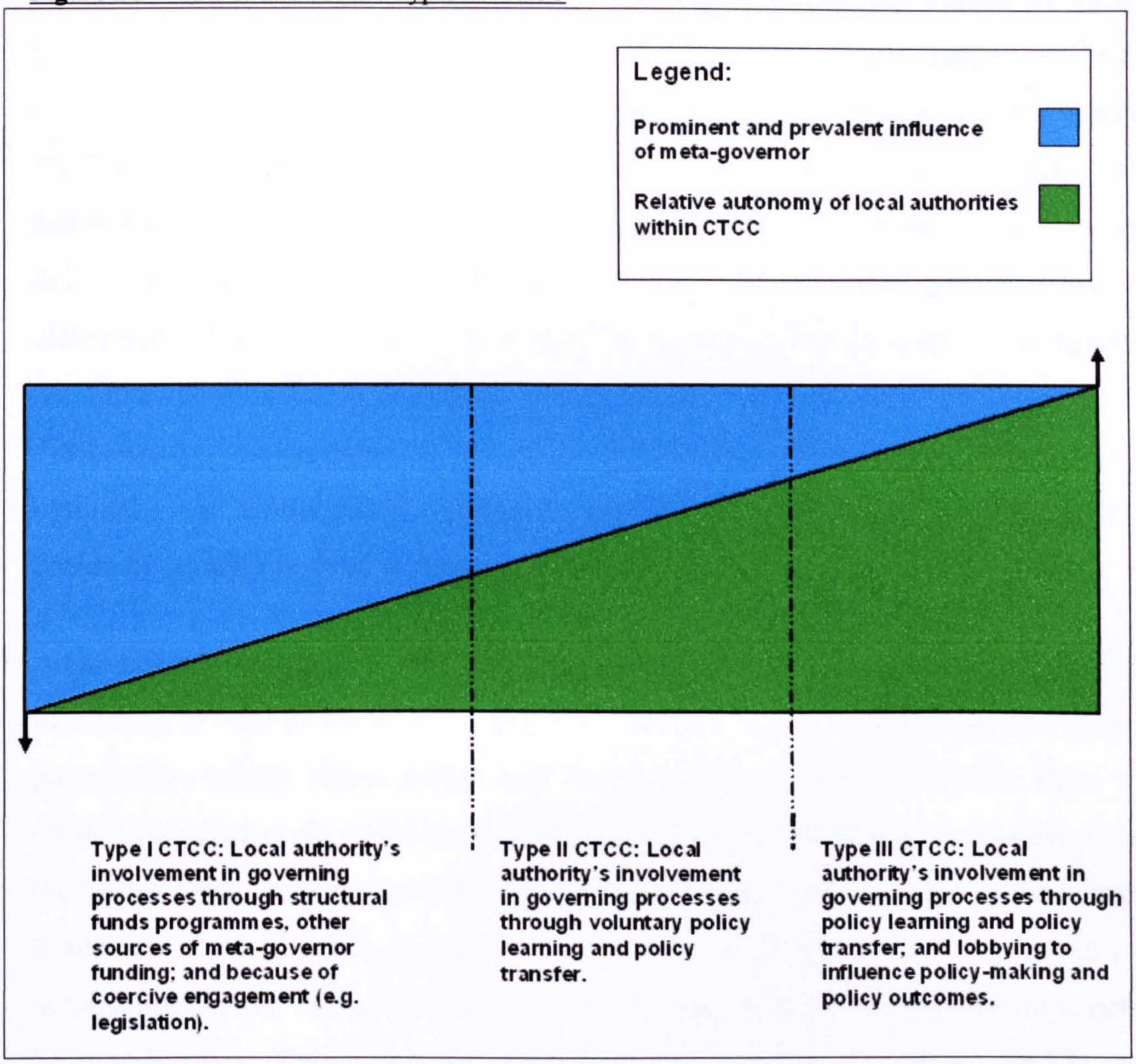
A key aim of the thesis is to unpack this vagueness. Thus, this section develops a framework based on the existing governance networks literature (Jessop, 2002; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1997; Skelcher et al., 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005, 2007a; Stoker, 1998) to illustrate how the research is underpinned and suggests how governance can take place through networks and CTCC; the subsequent chapters and the conclusion of this thesis inform these debates. Although in principle some governing practices have to greater or lesser extents changed through the purported shift from government to governance – for example, horizontal networks, shared goals, co-operation, and informality – this section argues that the overall structures of control have not. This is because of the prevalence of meta-governance and hierarchy in the political landscape in controlling networks through allocation of financial resources, and the use of legislation. In other words, there are top-down vertical linkages that permeate the mesh of horizontal networks, and bottom-up and top-down vertical 'Type II' MLG processes through which networks govern. Furthermore, it is not always possible to differentiate between meta-governance and hierarchical power because the latter is implemented through meta-governance structures (Jessop, 2002, Section 2.1.4). Within this context, it is argued in this section that it is helpful to inform debates about the autonomy of CTCC and how it

is governed, or governs, through the development of a continuum. This is an analytical construct that is used to explore the relative autonomy of CTCC and the prevalent characteristics of governing under the impact of the meta-governor. The analytical construct is used as a governance framework in the substantive chapters to examine, take forward debates, and reconceptualise how CTCC governs or is governed.

2.3.1 Three Main Types of CTCC

It is argued in this section that the relative autonomy of local authority networks and partnerships can be understood by drawing on a continuum of three types of CTCC (Figure 2.2). The continuum gives recognition to the networks self-steering capabilities and builds upon the argument that governance networks are self-regulating to a certain extent (e.g. Marcussen and Torfing, 2003, Section 2.2.2). Thus, rather than seeing the self-regulation of networks as taking place or not, it provides substance to these debates by examining the relative autonomy of networks under the auspices of hierarchy and meta-governance. Type I sees CTCC as having limited autonomy from the meta-governor as the local authority networks and partnerships are dependent on financial resources, or legislation to govern; Type II considers there is more scope for local authority actors within networks and partnerships to be involved in policy-making and Type III suggests that local authorities have the capabilities to mobilize their own resources within the networks and partnerships to govern and pursue their own objectives. Types I and II CTCC concern the governing processes associated with PL/PT and the use of best practice. Type III draws attention to the role of local authorities in lobbying supra-national and national institutions to influence policy making and its outcomes.

Figure 2.2 An Illustration of the Types of CTCC



In understanding CTCC through Type I, the autonomy afforded to local authority networks and partnerships is limited because the meta-governor is strongly regulating these. Type I CTCC involves co-operation for financial (European funding programmes), and mandatory reasons - for example, in undertaking benchmarking exercises between local authorities as has been promoted by the modernisation agenda (Chapter Five). Within an EU context, Type I CTCC ties in with the statement by Sheppard (2002) that the Commission uses networks to 'push its own neo-liberal policy agenda of enhancing economic growth' (Sheppard, 2002, p. 511) and to pursue its own aims and objectives. Local authorities adopt the good/best practice of another authority because they are funded by the Commission to do so, rather than because their own institution thinks that transferring the policy is a good idea. Many of the networks within the EU are developed and controlled through EU conditional structural funds (Jessop, 2002; Le Galès, 2002; Lenschow, 1999; Sheppard, 2002) (Chapter Four). The

governing system has not really changed through the role and impact of structural funds. Policy implementation is through persuasion by dependency on financial resources. The European Commission steers and guides policy implementation in localities. There are clear traits of a federal system through the Commission's hierarchical direction and control – the Commission uses the spread of networks to deliver its objectives. Nevertheless, there may well be some governance practice differences. The autonomy of CTCC may not be so much in the policy-making context, but rather how actors in networks implement the policy in terms of policy delivery. Furthermore, involvement in structural funds programmes by local authorities is optional – the Commission's power is substantially reduced should local authorities decide not to get involved in its programmes.

In the UK arena, in many ways arguments have moved on to talk about the availability of funding to local authorities for delivering policy on the ground through public-private partnerships within cities, rather than between them. Morgan (2007), Raco et al., (2006), Skelcher et al., (2006) and Whitehead (2003b) note how state funding is one of the ways that central government controls local public-private partnerships to implement national policy objectives in their localities. Type I CTCC implies that there is 'absolute power' though 'power over' (Dowding, 1995) in the relationships between local authorities. This is because of the strong meta-governing role by the EU and the state. For example, both the EU and the state control CTCC through allocation of funding resources, and the state uses Best Value legislation to facilitate and steer CTCC (Section 5.3). Thus, resources translate as power (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992) as actors and institutions have the influence, money, legitimacy, information/knowledge, access, contacts and expertise to govern society (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992) (Section 2.1). An issue is that whilst the governance networks definition by Marcussen and Torfing (2003) has informed Type I, they give greater autonomy to networks than has been discussed here.

Type II is narrower than Type I as it draws attention more specifically to governing through policy learning. Local authority actors mobilize their own resources to voluntarily work with each other through mimetism – coping with uncertainty by imitating other sub-national institutions that are considered more successful (Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Coleman and Perl, 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; John, 2000;

Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Radaelli, 2000; Stone, 2004; Ward and Williams, 1997). Mimetism allows for PL/PT to take place and for best practice to be drawn upon and downloaded to localities. However, there can still be the presence of a meta-governor as the network can still be monitored and guided by the EU or state, albeit does not have the power to control the network in line with its own objectives.

Furthermore, in Type II CTCC, there is scope for an internal meta-governor of the network. Societal actors can set the basic 'rules of the game' at the strategic level to influence policy outputs and outcomes and to pursue their own objectives (O'Toole Jr, 2007). As discussed, scholars (Leitner et al., 2002; Peters, 2000; Rhodes, 1996) argue how undertaking participation in governance networks on a voluntary basis allows for the exchange of ideas between sub-national actors. However, in an apparent contradiction some scholars emphasise the role of conditional structural funds in facilitating this process (Le Galès, 2002; Leitner and Sheppard, 1999; Leitner et al., 2002; Lenschow, 1999; Sheppard, 2002). Because of this confusion, the definition by Marcussen and Torfing (2003) (Section 2.2.2) that provides insight into how networks govern is applicable to understanding policy learning because it recognizes that networks are only regulating to a certain extent. Whilst it is useful to conceptually identify three main types of CTCC, in many ways Types I and II cross over in practice as mimetism can be undertaken on a voluntary basis or through persuasion by dependency on resources. However, there are clearly other differences between both types. As discussed, in Type I CTCC there is less financial and political autonomy by the local authority actors involved in networks. Furthermore, Type I CTCC means that local authority actors are involved in networks because of the availability of financial resources from the European Commission or central government and participation in networks takes place because of legislation.

In Type II CTCC there is more likely to be 'power to'. Like 'power over' associated with Type I CTCC, 'Power to' (Allen, 2003, p. 47; Dowding, 1996; Johnston et al., 2000) is also a form of absolute power as actors have the power to bring about outcomes through the ability of the dominant actor. However, in Type II CTCC, local authorities have the ability to 'secure outcomes, generated by the mobilization and deployment of resources, or rather "power sources"' (Allen, 2003, p. 47). Thus, as with Type I CTCC, resources can be used as a form of power. The bigger the capabilities

that local authorities have, for example, financial capital, skills, information, or contacts, the greater the assumed power. Local authorities have the power to engage in voluntary forms of PL/PT as they have the capacity to exchange knowledge for more effective policy-making.

In Type III, attention is drawn to the lobbying role of CTCC. Actors in local authority networks lobby against the Commission (and central government) to influence policy-making and policy outcomes (Fleurke and Willemse, 2006; Hooghe 1996; Marks et al., 1996; Peters & Pierre 2001; Scharpf 1997). Thus, they have the capacity to be freer from the meta-governor than is found in Types I and II. They can mobilize their own resources to influence decision-making at the EU level. Furthermore, as in Type II, there is scope for an internal meta-governor. Type III is not dissimilar to the ideal construct of how local authorities would govern through self-organizational network approaches that was defined by Schout and Jordan (2005) in Section 2.1.3. As with Type II CTCC, Type III CTCC is also associated with 'power to'. However, local authorities have the resource capacity to create a viable power that can lobby the EU for specific outcomes and common aims, albeit this does not mean that they succeed.

The three types are useful for conceptualizing the relative autonomy of CTCC. However, the substantive chapters (Four and Five) show that policy learning is the main reasons as to why CTCC is undertaken, and therefore the one that has the most empirical material collected for analysis. As such, Types I and II are the main approaches drawn upon and used to explore the nature of CTCC in subsequent chapters. In understanding the changes in governing practices in the purported shift from government to governance, the key characteristics of governing through networks can be identified. The characteristics can be used to further support the classification of the three types of CTCC discussed, as these can help to identify the relative autonomy of local authority networks and partnerships (Table 2.1). Section 2.2 has highlighted how the self-organizational literature is a useful starting point for getting to grips with the key governance practices and main characteristics (e.g. linkages, actors, institutions, relationships) (Table 2.1) of how governing takes place through networks. With these issues in mind, the author has developed Table 2.1 to highlight eight key characteristics of governing, and how their significance differs with respect to the relative autonomy or three types of CTCC. Each characteristic is discussed in turn.

The first four characteristics of governing identified in Table 2.1 concern how actors link with institutions in governing processes and outcomes. It is well documented in the governance networks literature (e.g. Kooiman, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1998) that the purported governance shift has seen an increase in the number of horizontal links of actors between institutions in comparison to the number of vertical linkages in the same vein (characteristic one). This means that increasingly there are emerging links between actors in different local authority institutions that are forging networks/partnerships that can be analysed through research methodologies (Chapter Three). The emergence and spread of links is apparent across all three types of CTCC. However, the key actors involved in the local authority networks/partnerships can differ in accordance with the different CTCC types (characteristics two and three). The governance shift, for example, has seen a governance role for actors based in a range of institutions, including the European Commission, central government, and private and voluntary sectors in policy-making and policy delivery.

In Type I CTCC, local authorities have closer interaction with European institutions and central government. By its nature, Type I CTCC involves more frequent engagement with these actors – for example, the European Commission has a meta-governing role in monitoring its European funding programmes. Similarly central government has a monitoring role of benchmarking activities between local authorities (Chapter Five). Type II CTCC has more autonomy from supra-national institutions and central government because of the role of voluntary interaction by local authorities. Therefore links between local authorities and the EU/state may not be so apparent. Type III CTCC in contrast may have strong vertical ties as lobbying by its nature involves engaging with institutions at other tiers of governance.

Table 2.1 Changes in Governing Practices

Characteristics of governing	**Central Government**	**CTCC Type I (little autonomy)**	**CTCC Type II (moderate autonomy)**	**CTCC Type III (high autonomy)**
1. Linkages	Few vertical networks.	Many horizontal networks. Close interaction with European institutions and central government.	Many horizontal networks. More autonomy from supra-national institutions and central government, and therefore these links may not be so apparent with them.	Many horizontal networks. Strong vertical ties as lobbying by its nature involves engaging with institutions at other tiers of governance.
2. Actors	Central government, and local government.	EU, central government, local authorities, private-actors, and voluntary sector.	EU, central government, local authorities, private-actors, and voluntary sector.	EU, central government, local authorities, private-actors, and voluntary sector.
3. Institutions	Few.	Many	Many	Many
4. Relationships	Formal.	More formal interaction between local authorities and the EU/state because of the formality in the practices, rules, and convention of co-operation, because of the strong meta-governing monitoring role.	Voluntary processes of informal interaction - more relaxed, personal, flexible means of interaction between local authorities and with EU/state.	More formal interaction between local authority institutions and the EU/state/ Formal processes that are undertaken in lobbying to influence policy-learning and policy outcomes.
5. Structure of authority	Hierarchy, Central control.	Strong vertical structures as hierarchical/meta-governing role by the EU/state through legislation and monitoring of the network.	Decentralised but networks monitored to a greater or lesser extent through a meta-governing role (e.g. guidance and advice) by the EU/state.	Two way processes in the vertical and horizontal linkages between local authorities, EU/state.
6. Knowledge transfer (inclusive of PL/PT and use of best practice)	Top-down by specialists and systematic.	Can be top-down by specialists and systematic. Also the potential for local, horizontal, and innovative. Experience of other sub-national actors as specialists/ know-how, and top-down knowledge from specialists.	Local authority actors rely more on the knowledge and experience of other authorities and the capacity to innovate policy-making in local contexts than they do on experts from central government in the development of policies and in implementing their	Local authority actors rely more on the knowledge and experience of other authorities and the capacity to innovate policy-making in local contexts than they do on experts from central government in the development of policies and in implementing their

			own reforms.	own reforms.
7. Co-ordinating mechanism of governance	Top-down rules, sanctions, and legislation. Participation by sub-national actors - mandatory.	Presence of meta-governance means that top-down rules, sanctions and legislation are prominent from outside of the local authority network. Participation by sub-national actors – mandatory, or heavily dependent on external funding resources.	Rules and legislation negotiated and defined by actors from within the network. Trust, shared goals. Participation by sub-national actors voluntary.	Local authority actors come together through shared common objectives to lobby to influence policy outcomes concerning shared agendas. Rules and legislation negotiated and defined by actors from within the network. Trust, shared goals. Participation by sub-national actors voluntary.
8. Resources and power	'Power over'. Central control – decentralized to local authority institutions.	'Power over'. Local authority Networks and partnerships are very dependent on resources from the European Commission or central government to govern.	'Power to'. Local authority networks have greater autonomy to mobilize their own resources to undertake governing, for example, policy learning.	'Power to'. Local authority actors have significant autonomy and resource capabilities to directly lobby the European Commission or nation state to influence policy-making and its outcomes.

Another important change in governing practices is the increase in informal relationships between actors on and at the different scales of governance (characteristic four). The development of inter-personal relationships and trust is seen by analysts as increasingly important to the success and functioning of the network/partnerships (Section 2.2). However, it is argued here that the extent to which relations are informal can depend on the type of CTCC. In Type I CTCC, local authority actors have more formal interactions with each other because of the formality in the practices, rules, and convention of co-operation. There will be formal procedures and practices in relation to benchmarking activities between local authorities (Chapter Five). Furthermore, there will be formal interaction by local authority practitioners with actors at the other tiers of governance as CTCC is strongly controlled by a meta-governor (Chapter Five). In Type II CTCC, local authority actors have more informal interactions with each other and actors at the other tiers of governance. This is because CTCC is undertaken on a

voluntary basis, which means that the processes of interaction are more relaxed, personal, and flexible where policy learning takes place and there is more autonomy from the EU or state meta-governor. In Type III CTCC, there is more formal interaction between local authority institutions and actors in the European Commission and central government. This is because of the formal processes that are undertaken in lobbying to influence policy-learning and policy outcomes.

The fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth characteristics (Table 2.1) concern how the processes of governing through CTCC (i.e. PL/PT; lobbying) takes place, and the extent to which CTCC has relative autonomy from the European Commission and the state. The structure of authority in the shift from hierarchy to networks changes (characteristic five). Hierarchical governance, for example, has clear roles and lines of control and authority and directive processes within organizations through vertical forms of co-ordination. Type I CTCC is strongly controlled by a meta-governor and there can be traits of hierarchy in the way that networks are created and governed, for example, through benchmarking activities between local authorities (Chapter Six). Type II has greater autonomy, but the network can still be monitored and guided by the meta-governor (EU/state). In Type III CTCC there is more autonomy than is found in Type I and Type II CTCC. However, it is more problematic to understand the implications of the change in governance structures for Type III CTCC. This is because examples of lobbying to influence policy outcomes in the governance literature are limited. This may reflect the fact that only a few entrepreneurial cities are involved in active European activities (e.g. Milan, Manchester, Birmingham, and Barcelona) (Benington and Harvey, 1998; Kern and Bulkeley, 2008; Marshall, 2005; Martins and Pearce, 1999). Lobbying by local authorities draws attention to two way processes in the vertical linkages in the scales of governance; this is unlike hierarchy where the processes are generally top down (e.g. 'Type I' MLG). Similarly, however, it draws attention to 'Type II' MLG where there are no scales but sub-national actors and EU/state institutions interact in a political landscape where 'tiers, disappear-they meld into one another' (Hooghe and Marks, 2001, p. 7).

In terms of knowledge transfer (characteristic six), where this takes place through a hierarchy, it is based on problem solving expertise rather than local experience (Scharpf, 1997). The implication of policy learning for Type I CTCC is that the purported

changes in governing structures have not changed concerning knowledge transfer. Chapter Six shows how central government has the capacity and power to bring in its own experts to steer local authorities through reform programmes where they are seen by the state to be failing in their service delivery. In short, the role of hierarchy in policy learning in the political landscape can be prominent. The implication for Type II CTCC is that actors within local authorities rely more on the knowledge and experience of other authorities through horizontal forms of co-ordination. Local authorities rely more on the capacity to innovate policy-making in local contexts than they do on experts from central government in the development of policies and in implementing their own reforms. The objective of best practice networks such as the Beacon Scheme is that some local authorities have developed their learning to become experts in certain policy areas – they can share their knowledge and experiences with less informed authorities (Rashman et al., 2005). Whilst Type III CTCC has given recognition to the lobbying role of CTCC, PL/PT can also be implemented through this category. The implications of PL/PT for Type III CTCC are the same as for Type II.

Characteristic seven concerns governing mechanisms. Governance network scholars (Jessop, 2003; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner et al., 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Section 2.2.2) argue that the governance shift from hierarchy to networks has seen the governing mechanism change from top-down rules, sanction and legislation, to one of shared goals and visions. There is an emphasis on negotiation between sub-national actors in policy-making and policy delivery rather than a reliance on top-down bureaucratic models of decision-making and service delivery. In Type I CTCC, the presence of meta-governance means that top-down rules, sanctions and legislation are prominent from outside of the local authority network. Furthermore this means that participation by local authority actors in networks can be mandatory. Given the compulsory nature of co-operation, trust as a co-ordination mechanism (Section 2.2.2) of Type I CTCC may not be that important between actors to take forward co-operation. Type II CTCC allows for greater scope for the rules and legislation to be negotiated and defined by actors from within the network, which is one of the essential characteristics of governance networks; and a key argument as to why these should be seen as self-regulating (to a certain extent) (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Section 6.2.3). Thus, the build-up and development of trust between local authority actors is very important in taking forward co-operation, as actors trust each other to adhere to their

responsibilities and to adhere to the rules of the network in co-operating with each other. In Type III CTCC, local authority actors come together to lobby to influence policy outcomes concerning shared agendas, for example, through the lobbying network EuroCities (Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Schultze, 2003). Trust and negotiation is important as local authority actors co-operate together on a voluntary basis to influence policy-making and its outcomes.

Characteristic eight concerns resources and power. One of the main changes in the purported governance shift is that actors in networks have the capabilities to mobilize their own resources, rather than depend on the EU or national state in policy-making, policy delivery, and in lobbying. In Type I CTCC, local authority networks and partnerships are very dependent on resources from the European Commission or central government to govern, in turn this restricts their autonomy. In Type II CTCC, local authority networks have greater autonomy to mobilize their own resources to undertake governing, for example, policy learning. In Type III CTCC, local authority actors have significant autonomy and resource capabilities to directly lobby the European Commission or nation state to influence policy-making and its outcomes. In summary, governing through networks is seen by governance scholars to be more flexible than governing through traditional governance institutions. This is reflected to varying extents across all types of CTCC - despite the role of meta-governance and hierarchy in the political landscape, all three types of CTCC have some self-regulating capabilities. This means that networks and partnerships in principle, can be more reflexive and responsive to addressing sustainable development in local contexts.

2.4 Conclusions: The Potential Implications of CTCC for Understanding Environmental Governance

This chapter has drawn on a range of literature concerning policy networks, network governance, governance networks, state structuration, and meta-governance that have been used collectively to explain the phenomenon of CTCC. To this end, this chapter has identified five key potential implications of CTCC for understanding (environmental) governance. First, debates on the restructuring processes of the state and the purported shift from government to governance can explain why the governance literature on networks (Jessop, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1997) has

drawn attention to self-organizational modes and forms of governing, which in turn can explain the political opportunity of CTCC. The restructuring processes have allowed for a reformation of local authorities' functions – for example, authorities have the autonomy to assist government in policy-making and to shape local policy contexts. However, in some cases it is not possible to separate public networks from public and private ones which means that in conceptualising CTCC this needs to be taken into consideration. The changing role of local governments from service provider to that of co-ordinator and local leader in urban politics means that they have a closer strategic interaction with non-public actors, for example, in public-private partnerships. Nevertheless, CTCC has emerged as distinct links between local authority institutions. Local authorities have forged links with each other as a means to share ideas and experiences about how to address sustainable development within their administrative boundaries. Thus, as Betsill and Bulkeley (2004) have argued, such networks deserve analysis in their own right. CTCC is a structure of governance as links are forged between institutions; and it is a process of governing, as local authorities engage in policy learning and lobbying roles with each other to address sustainable development objectives.

Second, the MLG (Goodwin et al., 2006; Jeffrey, 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002), policy networks (Rhodes, 1996; 1997) and governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) literature does not satisfactorily distinguish between how networks govern concerning more general concepts of governing in the delivery of public goods and services, and environmental governance, that is, governing to address and deliver on sustainable development objectives.

Third, the first generation research on policy networks and the second generation research on governance networks are a useful starting point for conceptualizing and understanding self-organizational approaches to governing through CTCC, but they are not sufficient. Whilst these theoretical conceptions can show 'what' is happening and 'why', the processes of 'how' things are going on are not sufficiently characterized, and are theoretically under-developed. For example, 'how' the processes of CTCC are taking place, and how CTCC, as an activity of local government practice, is shaping and influencing the political landscape. Nevertheless, it has been argued in this chapter that in examining CTCC it is more appropriate to understand sub-systems of governance

networks that make up the network governance concept, than policy networks. Governance networks provide greater clarity as to how governing can take place. For example, they draw attention to the role of resources, trust and inter-personal relationships as important characteristics which variously constrain or enable networks to govern. Furthermore, despite the emphasis on informality in governing through networks, the conceptual material has not highlighted how the emergence and spread of informal networks (and informal relationships) between local authorities are said to function or impact upon the political landscape. This means that the networks as a mode of governance, and governance networks as a form of governance concepts, are useful for understanding how CTCC might take place, but may not fully capture CTCC specifically in relation to environmental governing practices.

Fourth, for all the emphasis by European scholars on the important governing role of self-organizational networks, there is a plurality of governance that takes place in the political landscape. Because of meta-governance and hierarchy, there are governance debates as to whether networks govern to reflect local needs and concerns or are more about policy implementation reflecting the Commission and States aims and objectives – the chapter has shown there is a clear contradiction in the understanding as to how and why networks function – these debates are explored further in Chapters Five and Six. Ironically, the literature that specifically focuses on meta-governance (Jessop, 2002; Whitehead, 2003b) has shown how there is a need for a meta-governor and hierarchy because the development of inter-personal relationships, negotiations, trust, and shared visions that co-ordinate networks can be complex and problematic – hence, governance networks as a specific form of governance and as a process of governing can fail. CTCC involves a complicated mix of vertical and horizontal processes that shape and are shaped by its governing processes and outcomes.

Fifth, from this review of the debates, one narrative which emerges is that self-organizational networks emerge by themselves because of the political opportunity provided to them in state restructuring (Section 2.1.2). An alternative account is that they are created by a meta-governor and hierarchy (Section 2.1.4). The potential implications of meta-governance and hierarchy for understanding CTCC as a characteristic of the political landscape cannot be ignored. It requires closer investigation and outlines the implications of this thesis. To inform the debates about

how networks govern, to address the contradictions highlighted above, the author of this thesis has drawn on the governance networks literature to develop a governance framework for understanding and examining CTCC. This framework has explored three types of CTCC along a continuum that draws attention to the self-organizational approaches to governing through local authority networks and partnerships. The key characteristics of governing have been identified and discussed within the context of the three types of CTCC for understanding how local authority networks can govern subject to their relative autonomy from the European Commission and the state. This framework is used as an analytical tool in the substantive chapters to understand the political opportunity and relative autonomy of CTCC.

Chapter Three: Researching CTCC

This chapter presents the methodology underpinning the research, the evidence gathered, and its subsequent analysis. Three main methods have been used: postal surveys that were sent to one hundred local authorities who were members of the 'European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign' (ESCTC) network; semi-structured interviews; and document analysis[7]. The latter two methods were used together as a bridging approach within a case study format to 'link aspects of different sociological perspectives' (Miller and Fox, 2004). For example, to examine how the perceptions and experiences of practitioners that have been interviewed corresponds with how CTCC is portrayed in various policy documents, strategies, and legislation. Four case studies have been examined in the undertaking of this thesis: Peterborough City Council; Northumberland County Council; Aberdeen City Council and Plymouth City Council. The first two case studies concern CTCC in the policy area of climate change adaptation. The third and fourth case studies concern CTCC in the policy area of community planning. The process of selecting the case studies was part of the methodology as they were chosen from the survey feedback and the use of a separate case study criteria (Section 3.2.1). The chapter divides into five sections. First, the epistemology of researching CTCC is discussed. Second, the role of the postal survey as a method is explored; and the criteria for the selection of the four case studies is highlighted. Third, the case study research strategy and the use of semi-structured interviews (SSIs) and documents analysis within this are discussed. Furthermore, the transcribing and coding procedure in the data analysis is examined. Fourth, the policy areas of analysis and the four case studies are introduced. Finally, conclusions are drawn.

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[7] At the time the empirical field research was undertaken between 2005 and 2006, the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign (ESCTC) had ceased due to withdrawal of funding from the European Commission. However, it was re-launched in 2007 and built around a partnership between nine local authority networks, for example, the Association for Cities and Regions for Recycling (ACRR), Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), Climate Alliance, Energie Cités, and ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives); and is financially and politically supported by four campaign funders (rather than the European Commission) (see Section 4.1.2).

3.1 The Epistemology of Researching CTCC

In the practice of undertaking research, consideration has to be given to the epistemology within the methodological framework. The researcher needs to be aware of how he/she interprets the knowledge produced from the research – for example, how the knowledge that is gathered in the research process and its analysis is known to be real and true, has been developed, and is understood. Blaikie (1993) usefully identifies three main approaches to epistemology in the social sciences: positivist, interpretative, and realist. A positivist approach is a natural science outlook to understanding knowledge. It involves the gathering of empirical material in an objective manner, with an assumption that the researcher is neutral, and there are universal laws. Interpretive approaches argue that there is no objective world – rather, it is how meaning is given to the interpretation of the knowledge in light of the experiences in undertaking the research and preconditioned values of the researcher. Realists, like positivists, seek to explain the social world, but see the world as a constructed reality of different meanings, values, and knowledge by different groups. They seek to explore how underlying structures (e.g. cultural, economic, political, and social relationships) influence how knowledge is produced and framed (Bryman, 1992). Realists consider that society is produced and reproduced by actors, and that there is no single truth that is found when the multiple viewpoints of actors are explored in the field – there are multiple realities and for that reason multiple truths. The approach undertaken in the research of this thesis has been realist because by their nature the research questions explore debates concerning different discourses on the governing of CTCC. They seek to understand the different respective truths and where they come from – for example, whether the theory that conceptualises the nature of the key drivers of CTCC match up with its practice (Chapter Four). Cook and Crang (1995) draw on Hedges (1985) to highlight why it is problematic for social scientists to position themselves in a way that sees the world as having one universal truth:

> There are very few golden rules and certainly no magic formulae for cutting through to Truth - if indeed there is any single monolithic truth, which is not typically the case. Human beings are complex, ambivalent, inconsistent creatures; not even the brightest and best organised of us lives in a sharp-edged world where we have all consciously and consistently sorted out our

attitudes and beliefs on all conceivable subjects. It is a mistake to assume that there is a pristine Platonic reality under the muddle of our public utterances to which really sharp research tools can cut unerringly through. Underneath the mess of language lies a mess of thought and a tangle of behaviour. If our research tools cannot recognise ambivalence and inconsistency as real and important, they will not help us to a very profound understanding of human thoughts and behaviour (Cook and Crang, 1995, p. 11 citing Hedges, 1985).

To understand the multiple truths, discourse analysis (Section 3.3) has been employed on the interview transcripts and policy documentation analysis. This can allow for an examination of how discourses or discursive practices (statements) are constructed concerning the drivers of CTCC, and how local authority networks govern or are governed, by whom, how the arguments are made, and the reasons as to why.

The epistemological approach of the researcher can influence the data gathering process and the conclusions drawn from this, because their understanding of the way in which knowledge is produced can shape how they understand the world. The realist epistemological approach, for example, is to recognise 'there is no such thing as objective reality because everything is understood and interpreted through the eyes, ears and brain of analysis from a specific social context' (Davies, 2007, p. 156). Therefore, there is a degree of reflexivity – 'self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self-conscious *analytical* scrutiny of the self as researcher' (England, 1994, p. 84) - in realism approaches to understanding the ways that knowledge is constructed and the respective stories that are produced.

Furthermore, through reflexivity, positionality is located within realism approaches to epistemology. In other words, researchers 'are differently positioned subjects with different biographies' (England, 1994, p. 84-85) and they have 'different personal histories and lived experiences' (England, 1994, p. 85) when they come to the research. Therefore, each individual will have different personal characteristics which means that it is not possible to produce objective findings or those exactly the same as another. The researcher, for example, will already have an idea of the conclusions and preconceptions that he/she is likely to find (Davies, 2007). Gold (2002) explains:

> The resurgence of the question of positionality in human geography has come about partly as a response to the 'crisis of representation' which has dominated much of social science in recent years (Jackson, 1993). This shift has underlined the impossibility of carrying out and writing social research that is in some way 'value free' (Gold, 2002, p. 223-224)[8].

Therefore, qualitative researchers may question if they can draw valid conclusions from subjectivity in the research (Cook and Crang, 1995). However, a reflexive positionality can mean that the researcher is 'more open to any challenges to their theoretical position that fieldwork almost inevitably raises' (England, 1994, p., 94) (Section 3.3.1). Thus, as Cook and Crang (1995) and England (1994) note, there is value in subjective knowledge as 'the researcher explicitly acknowledges her/his reliance on the research subject to provide insight into the subtle nuances of meaning that structure and shape everyday lives' (England, 1994, p. 82).

In undertaking the Ph.D research on CTCC, the positionality of the researcher has involved a recognition that no knowledge can be impartial since he will approach the research with some preconceptions about how the world is understood based on his own personal characteristics or beliefs (Section 3.1). Furthermore, the positionality of the researcher in terms of the epistemology and in locating the self in relation to other actors within social structures does not just concern relationships within the context of SSIs with local authority practitioners – it also includes the relationship with CASE partner the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF)[9]. As the practical organization in the research, BSHF have highlighted how there are different understandings, meanings, and approaches in addressing the research than are necessarily found in undertaking an academic approach (Section 3.2). Visits were made to BSHF in Coalville (near Leicester) over the three year duration of the PhD for two week periods, three times per year. This has allowed for valuable insight into the types and means of work carried out by a renowned umbrella and 'in-house' research

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[8] Feminist theorists have been at the forefront of the positionality debates (e.g. Haraway, 1991 and Harding, 1991) (Gold, 2002, p. 224). However, as England (1994) notes, postionality is an important issue for a range of social scientists to consider and get to grips with.

[9] Co-operative Awards in Science and Engineering (CASE) studentships involve research collaboration between non-academic organisations and academic departments in the support of doctoral students researching topics of mutual interest.

organization, and has allowed for the research to be positioned in such a way that bridges theory with practice. Furthermore, the BSHF library provided an alternative to some of the more common academic type journals. The research questions were developed within a CASE context.

3.2 The Postal Survey – its Theory and Practice

Hoggart et al., (2002, p. 169) defines social surveys as '... a political tool to gather information about socio-economic conditions'. Their usefulness lies in the fact that 'they provide a relatively simple and straightforward approach to the study of attitudes, values, beliefs and motives' (Robson, 1993, p. 128). Sampling through the use of surveys is undertaken because resources limit capacities to study whole populations – nevertheless, sampling should allow for a generalized understanding of the research in question (Hoggart et al., 2002). With the help of BSHF, a survey entitled 'Survey on Urban Sustainability Co-operation – Your Local Authority Experience' was designed. BSHF helped with the types of questions to be included within the questionnaire, the order of questions, and the format. With the assistance of BSHF the survey was sent to a sample population of one hundred local authorities in the UK (October, 2005) that were once members of the ESCTC network[10].

The survey was designed as a research stage for three reasons. First, the survey has acted as a 'gateway' for identifying respondents that were willing to be involved in case studies (Section 3.3), of which 9 respondents suggested they were. Second, in accordance with the main research questions, the survey has allowed for an assessment of the sorts of links, exchanges and networks that are emerging through CTCC practices, and provided a picture of how CTCC is taking shape in the UK (Table 3.1) (Appendix 1 provides an example of the format of the questionnaire). Third, the survey has allowed for respondents to provide information that has not been highlighted from the literature reviews around CTCC (Chapter Two), but which is worthy of further investigation through the case studies. Examples include the importance of informal networks and the influence of the central governments modernisation agenda on policy

[10] There were actually one hundred and one local authorities involved in the ESCT network, but one of these has since been disbanded as an institution, meaning that only one hundred could be contacted.

learning and policy transfer (PL/PT) (Chapter Five). In summary, through the participation of local authority practitioners, the survey has been an important and valid source of knowledge that has informed the research on CTCC.

Table 3.1 Research Questions and Methods

Research questions	Object of research	Method	Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of methods used	Chapter relevant to the research questions
1. To what extent are UK-based local authorities engaging in CTCC?	Policy maker's respective local authority institutions.	Survey	**Strengths:** relatively cheap to undertake; generalisability of feedback; closed questions identify contrasting or similar processes at work in CTCC by local authorities. Open questions give more detail, and scope for new ideas, themes, questions, and concepts. **Weaknesses:** poor responses; bias in answers; participants making up answers if ignorant; participants not taking questions seriously.	Chapter Four
2. What sorts of links, exchanges, networks and partnerships are being established through the practices of CTCC undertaken by UK local authorities?	Policy maker's respective local authority institutions.	Survey; Case-study research	*(As above and below)*	Chapter Four; Chapter Five; Chapter Six
3. How, and with what implications, do policy transfer and policy learning emerge through CTCC?	Policy maker's respective local authority institutions; local councillors; local governance related institutions; and national level policy makers (e.g. DEFRA, CLG).	Case-study research	**SSIs -** **Strengths:** questions can be added or deleted, as deemed suitable and as new ideas arise. Subjective feel for the reality of the situation by the interviewer. **Weaknesses:** the interviewer may obtain incorrect information through incorrectly interpreting the feedback; participants making up answers if ignorant; bias in answers; time consuming in analysis.	Chapter Five
4. To what extent, and with what effect, do practices of CTCC disturb existing forms of policy delivery and implementation for urban sustainability?	Policy maker's respective local authority institutions; local councillors; local governance related institutions; and national level policy makers (e.g. DEFRA, CLG).	Case-study research	**Documentary analysis -** **Strengths:** extending data collection beyond that which is achievable through interviews or direct observation. This increases validity and reduces gaps in knowledge; it allows for an understanding of the processes taking place behind the scenes. **Weaknesses:** documents bias; researcher's interpretation bias; more general information than direct answers to interviewer's questions.	Chapter Five; Chapter Six

Whilst the ESCTC network had temporarily ceased when the field work was undertaken, it is not the network that is important, but rather a study of the local authorities that were involved with this. The ESCTC sample population for the study has been chosen for its common characteristics – a 'theoretical sample' population as opposed to a 'random' or statistical sample (Hoggart et al., 2002). A random sample could have been used, but a theoretical sample was chosen that was indicative of local authorities that are to various extents engaged in some form of co-operation. It could be argued that the sample population used in this study is not reflective of the extent that CTCC is taking place amongst all UK local authorities - that is, those that were provisionally members of the ESCTC network would be more active in co-operation than those who were not. However, there is no evidence to imply this is the case – local authorities that were members of 'Energy Cities' or any of the other networks could have been chosen. Interesting discussions ensued with BSHF concerning the use of surveys. As the more practical organization in the collaborative research, BSHF wanted a questionnaire to be sent to all UK-based local authorities to allow for a more thorough examination of CTCC. To address this proposition, a report was produced that examined the implications of surveying all UK local authorities. The conclusion was that a sample had to be taken as it was not practical to do this given the resources or time allowance within the PhD. Whilst it was not possible to accommodate BSHF's wishes on this occasion, understanding their perspective is an example of positionality. It is about recognizing that BSHF as the practical collaborative partner will be interested in the research from a more practical perspective, than an academic one.

Whilst the survey as a research strategy has proved to be useful for the three reasons above, it also has its limitations. Glastonbury and MacKean (2002) note that the most frequently suggested problem in the methodology literature regarding surveys is poor responses. There was a considerable amount of work and time involved in the development and dissemination of the survey to increase respondent rates. First, the methodology literature (Flowerdew and Martin, 1997; Glastonbury and MacKean, 2002) highlights the importance of using pilot studies before undertaking a more generalized survey. This is to test the survey process as a means to increase response rates. Questions can be modified or deleted as appropriate, and methods can be scrutinized on the effectiveness of the responses and data collected. A pilot questionnaire was sent to five local authorities that were outside of the ESCTC network.

Feedback from respondents suggested that further clarity on some of the questions was required. Furthermore, they suggested that response rates could be increased if the questionnaire was in an electronic format alongside the postal option, as this would be more convenient to complete and return. Taking this advice on board, an electronic questionnaire that practitioners could receive and return by e-mail was developed using 'Microsoft Word'. The final version of the electronic questionnaire had 'yes' or 'no' boxes that could be clicked with a mouse button, as well as the capacity for qualitative answers to be typed in.

Second, the electronic questionnaire was sent to the 100 former members of the ESCTC. Most respondents – 24 out of 31 – completed the questionnaire electronically. The remainder of the respondents printed the questionnaire out to complete and return by post, or they requested the questionnaire to be posted to them in the first instance, and once completed was returned in this way. This highlights the importance of cyberspace as a medium for interaction (as is explored in Section 5.1). It also illustrates that through perseverance it is possible to obtain a reasonable percentage (thirty one percent) of returned questionnaires through cold calling approaches. Statistical evidence would suggest that 'cold calling' results in a low response rate of less than twenty per cent (Denscombe, 1998; May, 1997). However, this is based on the assumption that the survey is a simple basic one that can be answered by most respondents. The questionnaire sent to the local authorities is more specialised and aimed at a target audience that is more likely to have specialist knowledge, skills, and experience in local policy-making and achieving sustainable development objectives. Furthermore, the target audience is likely to have many competing demands on their time. Thus, the researcher anticipated a maximum response rate of 30 from the 100 questionnaires sent out. This is because although the questionnaire could be completed within 15 to 20 minutes, was made as user friendly as possible and many practitioners informed the researcher that they found the questionnaire interesting, this is still extra work for the practitioners to contend with and requires some thought in its completion. Therefore, to increase the respondency rate, 25 of the respondents had to be chased up at least once. Initially this was through an e-mail with the attached questionnaire sent to them again. If required this was followed up via a telephone call as a reminder. Therefore given the difficulties in accessing individuals to complete the questionnaire the researcher was pleased with obtaining 31 replies.

Third, the structure of the questionnaire was designed by taking into consideration advice set out in the methodology literature (Flowerdew and Martin, 1997; Glastonbury and MacKean, 2002; Hoggart et al., 2000; Robson, 1993). The questions were designed so as not to make the respondent feel uncomfortable with the questions (i.e. privacy, suspicion, inferiority). Furthermore, the extent of additional information regarding the project that is passed onto them was minimal – for example, concerning definitions of sustainable development; and the extent to which CTCC is seen in the governance literature to have an important governance role (e.g. Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Leitner et al., 2002; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996; Ward and Williams, 1997) (Chapter Two, Sections 2.1 and 2.2), as this could have affected the answers to open questions. The questionnaire was designed to be straightforward and not awkward to read, and not overly lengthy. Furthermore, the questions were worded carefully for a better response, for example, in a simple and precise manner so that respondents would answer each respective question and not avoid them; and could provide answers to questions that were specifically asked of them. The questionnaire was designed to be relevant to the practitioners and the main research questions. In terms of ethics (analysis of right and wrong), the respondents were given assurances about confidentiality and anonymity. Whilst this is not stated in the letter sent out to them (Appendix 1), this was assured over the phone when discussions about completion of the questionnaire took place. Where respondents had requested the questionnaire to be sent electronically, confidentiality and anonymity was reconfirmed in the e-mail sent to them, to which the electronic questionnaire and letter were attached.

Fourth, rather than just sending the questionnaire to the Chief Executives department of local authorities to be forwarded to appropriate personnel, practitioners were provisionally identified that had a sustainable development role in each of the local authorities – although this took considerable time and patience. Given the broad nature as to the term 'sustainable development', the actor responsible for this can be affiliated with a number of departments – for example, economic development, environmental health, environmental policy, urban planning, community development, renewable energy and waste management. Ironically, despite the various discourses promoting the importance of sustainable development, finding an actor within a local authority with the specific title 'Sustainable Development Officer', or even finding a Sustainable Development department, was extremely rare. Moreover, in some instances the

questionnaire had to be passed around to various departments, causing further complications with responses. This is not a flaw in the research design as the survey was designed to be a feeler gauge to provide an indicator of the types of co-operation that local authorities are involved in. Having identified an appropriate actor through the use of phone calls and web-based materials to whom the survey could be sent, two or three follow-up phone calls per respondent were undertaken to increase the survey response rates. Because of competing demands on practitioner's time, by their own admission the questionnaire was not high on their priority list. However, it is thought that the reputable endorsement of the questionnaire by BSHF and ESRC also helped to increase the participation rates.

The survey feedback has been particularly useful for developing knowledge that has been used in drawing conclusions to research questions one and two (Table 3.1). Nevertheless, a number of measures were put into place to make the most of the knowledge and insight of the practitioners in their completion of the questionnaire, and to reduce the collection of inaccurate information and misconceptions in its analysis. The methodology literature (Flowerdew and Martin, 1997; Glastonbury and MacKean, 2002; Hoggart et al., 2002; Robson, 1993) draws attention to the fact that knowledge in the feedback from survey findings can have bias and bring validity into dispute. Some practitioners may, for example, exaggerate in their answer to a question. Within the context of the Ph.D, respondents may overstate the extent to which CTCC is taking place so that they and their authority are seen in a good light. Furthermore, the findings may lead to bias if the questions within the questionnaire are of a poor design, for example, if they are designed to force respondents to answer them from an opinion rather than more factual knowledge. Findings can also be biased if questions are leading, or if any questions have been left out that could have allowed for a different perspective to have been gained concerning the research problem. Regarding the latter point, a thorough review of the literature around CTCC meant that the questionnaire captured the main types of co-operation, for example, twin-city arrangements, cross-border working, project working, lobbying and knowledge transfer networks that respondents could be involved in. Furthermore, there were spaces alongside the answer options to respective questions to add any additional material as may be required. Moreover, a way around some of the problems discussed above and to make the most of

the practitioners knowledge, has been to use the pilot study (highlighted earlier in the section) as a feedback mechanism to improve the quality of the questionnaire.

The points discussed above tie in with the epistemology of the research concerning how knowledge that is produced is known and understood. Flowerdew and Martin (1997), Glastonbury and MacKean (2002), Hoggart et al., (2000) and Robson (1993) provide some useful pointers for addressing epistemological issues. These authors suggest the questionnaire should have a reasonable balance of open and closed questions. The methodology literature (Flowerdew and Martin, 1997; Glastonbury and MacKean, 2002; Hoggart et al., 2000; Robson, 1993) recognizes that open-ended questions can cause problems in reliability and interpretation, and that the feedback may not focus on the research questions. However, it also recognizes that such questions allow for more detail and scope for new ideas, themes, questions, and concepts to be put across. As an example, open-ended questions can allow practitioners to illustrate their understanding of the discourses concerning the drivers of CTCC, the role of CTCC in the political landscape, and the nature of sustainable development.

The methodology literature suggests that to aid evaluation when analysing results by individual respondents and comparing between them, some questions should incorporate closed box answers. Closed box questions can, for example, be accompanied by a number of related closed box questions to increase the validity and value of the knowledge that they produce by individual respondents. Similarly, they can increase validity, reliability, and verifiability of results between respondents – for example, in identifying similar or contrasting processes in CTCC. Moreover, closed questions can be statistically analysed. There is plenty of literature on statistical analysis of survey data (see Eyles, 1988; Fink, 1995a; Fink, 1995b; Gillham, 2000). Statistics can be used to explore statistical significance between fixed and non-fixed variables – for example, whether there is a correlation between the seniority of a local authority practitioner and his/her involvement in CTCC for funding purposes. The computer statistics package SPSS can be used in this work; for example, in using 'Chi square' to determine the strength of the relationship between these variables. However, the sample population of thirty one questionnaires is quite small to undertake statistical tests on, and statistical analysis of an in-depth nature was not one of the main purposes of the survey. Therefore, whilst the data from the survey findings has been entered into

the software programme 'Statistical Package for the Social Sciences' (SPSS), this has been used to create a number of graphs. The graphs are used to illustrate the main themes that have emerged from the survey findings and to support the main arguments.

Despite the procedures put in place in the design of the survey to increase the reliability and validity of the findings (as discussed), there are no means to measure respondents' honesty. Some respondents may complete the questionnaire in a way that shows them in a good light, as opposed to the reality of the situation. Moreover, respondents may not answer the questions seriously. It is important to be aware of this when examining the data, and to undertake cross-checks with other sources of evidence if any discrepancies arise. One way that this has been undertaken in this thesis is to explore in greater detail some of the main findings of the survey (e.g. the suggested decreasing significance of structural funds – Chapter Four) through the four case studies. It should be noted that the survey approach is likely to consist of many observations, with less confidence in individual responses, although still statistically significant. In contrast, in the case study approach there are fewer more detailed observations and more confidence in the individual responses, but the data is most likely not to be statistically significant (Summer and Tribe, 2004). Having explored the role of the survey in the thesis research, the next section discusses how the four case studies were chosen for empirical analysis.

3.2.1 Criteria for Identifying the Four Case Studies

There were 9 local authority respondents from the survey that suggested they would be prepared to be involved in further qualitative analysis; specifically as participants in case studies. Four local authority case studies were selected from the 9 respondents through a criteria report (Appendix 2) based on a two phase process. The first phase involved a system that awarded points to local authorities subject to the extent they were involved in CTCC concerning six main themes: (1) the types of co-operation (e.g. twin cities; project working; lobbying to influence policy outcomes; PL/PT); (2) the policy areas that they were involved in, in the learning and sharing of best practice; (3) the number of networks that they were involved in overseas; (4) the number of networks that they were involved in within the UK; (5) the extent of dissemination of sustainable

development information at International, European, and UK levels; (6) the extent of drawing on sustainable development information from other local authorities at International, European, and UK levels. These themes are important because they provide insight into the types of links, exchanges, and networks that local authorities were involved in. Whilst, the governance literature suggests that the governing processes of CTCC concerns PL/PT (Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; John and Cole, 2000; Le Galès, 2001; Rashman and Hartley, 2002) and lobbying to influence policy outcomes (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley et al., 2003; Leitner et al., 2002), the types of co-operation, and number of networks that local authorities are involved in has generally not been addressed.

The assumption is that the more points the local authority has, the greater its involvement in CTCC practices. Therefore this will provide a better case study to follow up as there will be more material to draw upon for analysis. However, one of the case studies was selected on the premise that it is involved in low levels of co-operation (i.e. Peterborough City Council). Researching a local authority that has lower levels of co-operation has provided useful insight into the barriers/obstacles in CTCC; the reasons why co-operation is low or co-operation is not deemed to be important for sustainable development. With the exception of the local authority that scored the lowest points that has been selected for one of the case studies, Phase Two was used to award further points to those local authorities that had been awarded maximum sum total points. This is so that the three other case studies could be chosen (i.e. Northumberland County Council; Plymouth City Council; Aberdeen City Council) in light of additional variables: (a) geographical location; (b) limited experience; (c) type of local authority (i.e. city/county); (d) involvement of local authorities in specific networks/networking; (e) relevance of sustainable development component and (f) budget for the case studies.

Furthermore, the actual policy areas themselves are of particular interest to research for analysis of CTCC. Peterborough City Council and Northumberland County Council were selected for analysis of CTCC in the policy area of climate change adaptation; and Aberdeen City Council and Plymouth City Council were selected for analysis of CTCC in the policy area of community planning. Climate change adaptation was chosen because survey respondents indicated this to be a policy area of emerging relevance to

them in light of political scrutiny, and they are keen to forge networks and partnerships for policy learning to take place. Community planning was chosen because survey respondents suggested this is a policy area that has sustainability at its core, and is promoted by central government as an important policy area that has to be addressed, for example, in the development of Sustainable Community Strategies (Raco et al., 2006). Thus, the survey feedback suggests that local authorities are turning to other authorities to draw on policy learning to address community planning. With these considerations in mind, the questionnaire feedback from the respondents for the respective four case study local authorities identified whether analysis of their authority should focus on climate change adaptation or community planning. The role of the case studies as the main means of collecting the empirical material to address the research questions is explored in the next section.

3.3 The Case Study Research Strategy

Robson (1993) defines a case study as:

> A strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence (Robson, 1993, p. 5).

Beyond the recognition that case studies are useful for exploring how and why a phenomenon takes place, the social science literature disagrees as to the extent to which the purpose of a case study is to inform and test theories. Hoggart et al., (2002) and Stake (1995) suggest that the use of a case study is undertaken in its own right – for example, to understand processes taking place relating to a phenomenon – rather than to prove whether a specific theory is right, or to look for general trends as in the use of surveys. These authors state, for example, that it is problematic to determine if the findings from case studies are unique, or part of a common trend. In contrast, Benton and Craib (2001), and Walton (2000) argue that preconceived ideas or hypotheses about the theory underlying the processes at work (e.g. how local authorities co-operate), can be tested and inform theoretical debates by analysing the practice. However, they draw the line at suggesting that case studies can be used to predict outcomes. In summary,

case studies can '...verify one theoretical notion, contradict another, and discover some new theory, concept or model' (Vaughan, 2000, p. 182).

One way to find middle ground in the arguments as to how theories link to actual practice is through the use of multiple case studies. The use of multiple case studies can allow for an understanding that there are different ways that ideas and evidence can be related (Ragin, 2000). Multiple case studies can bring an understanding to a '... problematic relationship between ideas and evidence, between theory and data' (Ragin, 2000, p. 218).

The case study methods - SSIs and document analysis - have involved getting to grips with the contentions of meanings and the history of CTCC. Therefore, discourse analysis has been employed on them. Discourse analyses are '... multiple and competing sets of ideas and metaphors embracing both text and practice' (Sharp and Richardson, 2001, p. 196). Discourse analysis is concerned with how ideas and concepts produce '... a particular set of practices through which is given meaning to physical and social realities' (Sharp and Richardson, 2001, p. 198). Discourses are used to control the behaviour of others through normative routines and practices. Foucault, for example, explains that discursive practices are characterised by:

> A delineation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories (Foucault 1977: 199).

The value of discourse analysis in understanding key themes and actors narratives is an important part of the research process in undertaking SSIs:

> Richness of detail and historical complexity that can be derived from an interview-based approach allows one to reconstruct a coherent representation of how and why particular phenomena came to be (Schoenberger, 1991. p. 188).

Foucault's discourse approach to analysis is post-structuralist in nature and seeks to question how, why, and by whom, the truth is credited to in certain arguments, and not to others. Foucauldian approaches to discourse analysis concern how changes in the

structure of society can be theorised by examining how different meanings and discourses contend for authority in society (Sharp and Richardson, 2001, p. 196). For example, Sharp and Richardson explain that power struggles can take place between economic, environmental, and social discourses (and actors supporting these respective approaches) where knowledge and truth in the text is contested. Interviews are important as they are used to interpret if other practices, actions, or events and changes in institutional structures may be important, and to research the history and perceptions and stories of the actors involved (Kendall and Wickham, 1999; McHoul and Grace, 1993; Sharp and Richardson, 2001). However, there is a need to look beyond the text created in an interview to explore it's underlying meanings. Thus, documents are examined to understand the difference between the 'sayable' and the 'visible' within policy-making to understand the discourse struggles, and to provide the researcher with understandings about how these have shaped the policy process (and rhetoric) and outcomes. There are a number of events, structures, and changes in policy that influence the dominant discourses at play. In summary, as Ley notes, 'the complex relations of people and place requires a methodology of engagement not detached, of informal dialogue as well as formal documentation' (Ley, 1988, p. 126).

Adopting a discourse analysis approach to this thesis is useful for two reasons in relation to the main research questions. First, it can allow for an interpretation as to how the discourses of CTCC are located within physical and social realities – for example, the suggested drivers of CTCC and the perceived importance of CTCC in achieving sustainable development objectives. Second, it can allow for an understanding of the power relationships within CTCC (for example, 'power over' and 'power to' which has been discussed in relation to the types of CTCC in Section 2.3. SSIs and policy documentary analysis are the key methods employed in examining the case studies, and these are discussed in turn.

3.3.1 Semi-structured Interviews

The majority of the evidence collected to address the research questions has been obtained through face-to-face SSIs with a range of practitioners across the four case studies. Robson defines SSIs as where:

> The interviewer has clearly defined purposes, but seeks to achieve them through some flexibility in wording and in the order of presentation of questions (Robson, 1993, p. 227).

The main rationale of using SSIs in this thesis is to '... make sense of the actions and intentions of people as knowledgeable agents ...' (Ley, 1988, p. 121) in relation to the research questions. This means that the interviewer should be able to 'reflect on and interpret the understandings and shed meanings on people's everyday social world and realities' (Dwyer and Limb, 2001). In developing a partial structure to the set of questions to ask the interviewee, SSIs allow for the flow of conversation to be fluid with that which seems appropriate to the research. Furthermore, questions can be added or deleted as deemed suitable and as new ideas arise that require further exploration. SSIs allow for meanings to be attached to the questions asked to the respondents and their answers – a sample list of questions asked at the SSIs is presented in Appendix 3. The questions that were asked at the SSIs concerned gaps in the governance literature that discusses self-organizational networks (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1996), for example, the processes of governing between local authorities. The interviews also provided an opportunity to follow-up enquiries from the survey, for example, the importance of the modernisation agenda in enabling or constraining CTCC (Chapters Five and Six). Therefore, SSIs have allowed for an examination of the ways in which policies, problems, and concepts are understood and used by different actors. For example, the extent to which PL/PT is used to address a policy problem, why this may or may not be considered important, and how these processes take place by different actors (Chapter Five).

As has been highlighted in Section 3.1 the subjective nature of SSIs means that the researcher needs to have an awareness of his/her positionality when drawing upon the knowledge of the research subject and should recognise that this knowledge is subjective. This is because 'every interview text selectively and unsystematically reconstructs that world, tells and performs a story accordingly to its own version of narrative logic' (Denzin, 2001, p. 25-26). Cook and Crang (1995) appreciate how the subjective nature of qualitative methodologies such as SSIs will mean that qualitative researchers think 'that they cannot draw valid conclusions, unlike their colleagues using more "objective approaches"' (Cook and Crang, 1995, p. 10). However, Cook and

Crang (1995), Denzin, 2001; England (1994), Rose (1997), and Schoenberger (1991) argue that it does not matter that qualitative methodologies do not 'assume an abstract vantage point' (Cook and Crang, 1995, p. 10). This is because qualitative research involves relying on subjective or biased data as researchers 'are involved in the struggle to produce *inter-subjective truths,* to understand why so many versions of events are produced and recited' (Cook and Crang, 1995, p. 11):

> It is the ways in which people make sense of the events around them, and render these 'true' in their own terms, that is most revealing about how their/our lives are embroiled in larger social, cultural, economic and political processes. Therefore, stories told in the research encounter are not simply to be regarded as means of mirroring the world, but as the means *through which* it is constructed, understood and acted upon (Cook and Crang, 1995, p. 11).

In summary, as Crang and Cook (1995) explain, qualitative research reveals that 'societies are always messier than our theories of them' (Crang and Crook, 1995, p. 11). Within the context of this Ph.D, through engaging with qualitative methodologies and local authority practitioners, some of this 'messiness' has been untangled. Local authority practitioners have been a valuable source of knowledge; and their perspectives are valid and have been important in informing the CTCC research and addressing the research questions and conclusions.

Nevertheless, there are four main potential problems with SSIs that the methodology literature stresses that the researcher needs to be aware of which concern the interview process and analysis of the data gathered. First, is the bias and misleading information that interviewees may give to the interviewer. Hoggart et al., (2002) referring to Katz (1994) suggest that the information received can be biased where the interviewee is examining his/her own practices by exaggerating the extent of the practice taking place – for example, the extent to which CTCC is undertaken. Bias is further stimulated because 'people do not like to admit ignorance and might make up an answer if they do not know it' (Glastonbury and MacKean, 2002, p. 234). In this respect, it is the responsibility of the interviewer to deploy a range of validity techniques, such as the use of the interview technique itself. In undertaking the interviews, for example, familiarization with the literature surrounding CTCC as a means of preparing for the

interviews meant that if there seemed to be any irregularities with practitioners answers, these lines of enquiry could be pursued further. The interviewer therefore also has a responsibility not to be too closed minded to the answers provided to any lines of enquiry made. Furthermore, the interviewer should frame the questions and follow-up questions in such a way that allows for a two-way dialogue and that engages the respondent to discuss and work through the research issue rather than be drawn into a descriptive narrative (Schoenberger, 1991, p.182). Another way to check for inconsistencies is to follow-up analysis of the interview material with telephone enquiries to clarify the issue with the practitioner at a later date or request another interview. Furthermore, the researcher can cross-reference dialogue from the interviews with other actors' responses, and material highlighted in policy documents as part of the discourse analysis. At the same time it has to be recognized that there may well be differing accounts of how actors have approached policy problems. This is acceptable considering the epistemology of the research recognizes multiple truths.

The second problem with SSIs as a research method is that the interviewee may go off on a tangent, and the answer to the interviewer's question becomes tangled, and the main questions may not be answered sufficiently (Creswell, 1994; Robson, 1993). This is why Schoenberger (1991) emphasises the importance of the interviewer engaging the interviewee in discussions concerning the research problem, 'In this way, the respondent contributes to shaping the content of the discussion without controlling it' (Schoenberger, 1991, p.182). In undertaking the interviews it was at times necessary to interrupt the practitioner's conversation to redirect the dialogue back to the main themes to be discussed. Third is that the interviewer may obtain incorrect information through the use of open ended questions. Moreover, open ended questions can mean that the answers are more difficult to analyse than closed ones (Creswell, 1994; Robson, 1993). There are suggestions to deal with validity and rigour with this in mind. Systematic criteria is required where some topics must be covered by all respondents; by using similar structured open and closed questions, rigour and validity should not be greatly affected (Allen, 2002; Glastonbury and MacKean, 2002). The interview questions were structured in a coherent order to allow for both consistency and flexibility. Furthermore, the openness of some of the questions has been a strength. Open ended questions mean that more interesting information can be provided by the interviewee. Open ended questions have, for example, allowed for an exploration of PL/PT and the

drivers of this by a local authority to be embedded in a historical context in relation to the specific case study (Chapter Four). Therefore, as Schoenberger (1991) notes, the interview can be an opportunity for discussion concerning a research problem within set parameters that are controlled by the interviewer so that discussions do not go off on a tangent:

> 'The interview format should capitalize on the strengths of open-endedness. The interview should be structured and directed, but neither inflexible nor passive' (Schoenberger, 1991, p. 187).

The fourth critique of SSIs is that the interviewer may obtain incorrect information by incorrectly interpreting the feedback. The main point is to have an awareness of the positionality of the researcher and the subjectivity of the knowledge developed during the research process. In short, as Ley and Mountz (2001, p. 235) note, 'all methods are unavoidable social products' and therefore subjective. Rose (1997), for example, explains that the researcher needs to be aware that he/she will take academic knowledge into the interview, but practitioners may discuss their knowledge in a more practical language. Thus, the interview discussion may not fit with the researcher's academic knowledge and how they anticipated answers to their questions. Thus, as Rose (1997) notes, the researcher needs to be aware of 'situated knowledge' in the research process:

> 'Situated knowledge is negotiated between different knowledges, and that negotiation both resists the authority of the academic and recognizes the knowledges of both researcher and researched' (Rose, 1997, p. 315)

Within the context of the Ph.D research, interview questions were directed at the practitioners that were not too conceptual but had some practical basis (e.g. Appendix 3). Furthermore, where discussions concerning notions of sustainability, climate change and Sustainable Community Strategies were discussed, the language used by practitioners was not in some cases dissimilar to that of academia. This reflects the high standard of education by some of the elites interviewed – for example, at least four of the practitioners interviewed across the four case studies had obtained doctorates in the social or physical sciences.

Another reason as to why the interviewer may obtain incorrect information by incorrectly interpreting the feedback is because there can be bias on behalf of the researcher. The researcher may think that they already have an idea of the conclusions and preconceptions that they are likely to find (Davies, 2007). However, the fact that the researcher will also have his/her own paradigm does not have to be detrimental, as this can test theoretical ideas, and assumptions. As an example, the assumed position by the researcher in undertaking the Ph.D research was that the promotion of climate change adaptation by central government means that this is an important policy area that is being addressed by local governments. However, in the undertaking of the interviews this turned out to not necessarily be the case (Section 3.4). A final point needs to be noted about the role of ethics in the interview – 'standards of what is morally right or wrong' (Rees, 2002 citing Barnes, 1979) and power relations.

Whilst the build-up of a rapport with interviewees is suggested in the methodology literature as a way to develop trust and gain information, Hoggart et al., (2002) cautions that this can lead to concerns about lack of neutrality – for example, in writing about the research subjects in a favourable light. As England (1994) notes, 'years of positivist-inspired training have taught us that impersonal, neutral detachment is an important criterion for good research' (England, 1994, p. 81). However, England (1994) goes on to explain:

> 'As well as being our object of inquiry, the world is an inter subjective creation and, as such, we cannot put our commonsense knowledge of social structures to one side' (England, 1994, p. 81).

To illustrate her point, England (1994) draws on Stanley and Wise (1993) to argue that 'treating people like objects - sex objects or research objects - is morally unjustifiable' (England, 1994, p. 81). Thus, Cook and Crang (1995) and England (1994) rightly argue that 'those who are researched should be treated like people and not as mere mines of information to be exploited by the researcher as the neutral collector of "facts"' (England, 1994, p. 82). Furthermore, England (1994) suggests that relationships between the interviewer and interviewee will most likely 'be reciprocal, asymmetrical, or potentially exploitative; and the researcher can adopt a stance of intimidation, ingratiation, self-promotion, or supplication' (England, 1994, p. 82). England (1994) points out that 'most feminists usually favor the role of supplicant, seeking reciprocal

relationships based on empathy and mutual respect, and often sharing their knowledge with those they research' (England, 1994, p. 82). England (1994) argues that supplication – whereby the researcher recognises his/her dependence on the interviewee to provide insight, information, and knowledge – has the potential to deal with 'asymmetrical and potentially exploitative power relations by shifting a lot of power over to the researched' (England, 1994, p. 82). Similarly, Davies (2007) suggests:

> 'Good qualitative researchers will acknowledge the power of the self, but they will also employ professional skills in order to gain access to the perspectives of those whom they are interviewing' (Davies, 2007, p. 157).

Within the context of the Ph.D research the researcher was going into the interviews with little practical experience. Therefore, he was dependent upon the interviewees for their answers and value of knowledge without any intrinsic familiarisation with local government working practices. Nevertheless, through interviewing a range of actors at the different scales of governance - for example, in local government, regional institutions like Regional Development Agencies, and in central government - he has been able to situate the respective actor's stories and develop knowledge and insight concerning the practices of CTCC to address the research questions.

Another key point that was considered and has been highlighted by England (1994) and Davies (2007) above is that relationships between the interviewer and interviewee involve the role of power. Power relations between the researcher and the interviewee can be dynamic. The researcher may have education and access to privileged resources, but interviewees such as elites (professionals or politicians) can have a great deal of interview experience and be trained to deflect difficult questions, and use jargon knowledge (Hoggart et al., 2002; Kobayshi, 2001; Ley 1998; Schoenberger, 1991). Additionally, the interviewee can refuse to answer questions. Therefore, the researcher should utilize questions that focus on knowledge facts rather than interviewee opinions. Not only was this technique employed, but the avoidance of questions was generally not a problem in the interviews undertaken. More often than not the interviews were an outlet for expression of frustration by a number of practitioners that are exasperated by the bureaucracy of local government. Furthermore, a rapport was quickly built up with

the interviewees and they trusted that where anything would be said that they wanted to be kept confidential, or off the record, this wish would be respected – as it has been.

Given the subjective nature of interviews and the dynamics of power relations, there are implications in the role and influence of the interviewer on the interviewee. For example, the researcher's subjective stance means his/her identity (i.e. gender, class, race, nationality, politics, education, and experience) will shape the interactions and knowledge gained from informants (Creswell, 1994; Miller and Glassner, 2006; Robson, 1993; Rose, 1997; Valentine, 1997):

> The issue of how interviewees respond to us based on who we are – in their lives, as well as the social categories to which we belong, such as age, gender, class and race – is a practical concern as well as an epistemological or theoretical one (Miller and Glassner, 2006, p. 127-128)

Furthermore, another power and knowledge issue is whilst the researcher might promise confidentiality, their presence is still intrusive and they could still betray the interviewee, especially concerning the sensitivity of information. Thus, as Cook and Crang and (1995) note:

> In terms of gaining access, not only must the significance of the researcher's position and apparent intentions be considered but so too must her/his responsibilities over how the people being researched will be represented in any account produced, how this will be circulated, and the impact that this might have on their lives in the future (Cook and Crang, 1995, p. 18).

Within the context of this thesis, Chapter Six highlights how there can be various tensions between practitioners in co-operation through partnership and networks. During field interviews practitioners expressed concern at the risk of various tensions between them becoming publicly exposed by the Ph.D research. Thus, in writing this thesis the author has been very careful not to compromise this trust where specific names and job descriptions have been mentioned during the interviews that highlight conflicts in co-operation that could be detrimental to their working relationships. Another example of the impact of the role and influence of the interviewer on the interviewee is that the authority of academic knowledge is deeply regulated by power

relations (Rose, 1997). An example of this within the Ph.D research is how one practitioner lacked confidence to talk about the impacts of climate change and sought the researchers own perspective. The interviewer pointed out he would gladly discuss this at the end of the interview but at that particular point in time the intention of the interview was to draw on the interviewees own knowledge.

Smith (1988, p. 255) notes that 'qualitative research raises ethical issues which may not be so starkly revealed in other approaches. Examples relate to: consent to reading files and publishing interviewee quotations; deception (i.e. use of hidden tape recorders); and accepting responsibility for confidentiality and trust. These issues go beyond the research act, as they are important in analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of research findings, and as this can affect the material that is collected and the questions that are asked (Hoggart et al., 2002; Robson, 1993; Valentine, 2001). In all the interviews undertaken, these issues were considered and ethics was of the highest possible standard. For example, consent forms signed by the interviewee made sure he/she was aware that at their request certain information would remain confidential and their identities protected. Furthermore, interviewees consented to note taking during the interviews. Bryman (1992) advises a problem of taking notes is that the interviewee acts in a less natural manner as their attention is focussed more on the interviewer scribbling down points which may distract them, than thinking through the questions being asked. However, the interviews were held with local authority policy officers who were unphased by the note-taking, and seemed to expect this. Furthermore, note-taking had to be undertaken in case the recording of the interview happened to fail. As a key example of ethical standards, interviewees were aware and consented to the interviews being recorded. They were also aware that the recorder could be 'paused' at any time should they wish to speak in confidence about something.

In some instances, recorded telephone interviews took place instead of a face-to-face interview. As Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) note these should only be used as an alternative to face-to-face interviews where the interviewee suggests he/she is not available for a longer interview, or that the information they can provide is not worthy of the longer face-to-face interview. The main question the interviewer has to ask him/herself 'is whether telephone interviews can "stand in" for face-to-face interviews without reducing data quality' (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004, p. 115). The answer to

this is yes for two reasons. First, the 'quantity, nature and depth of responses' (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004, p, 113) of the data does not necessarily differ in the use of face-to-face or telephone interviews if the systematic structure of questions is the same – which it was. Whilst it has not been possible to probe respondents on visual cues through telephone interviews, it has still been possible to probe them based on verbal ones – for example, hesitations, sighs, and so forth (Creswell, 1994). Second, in most cases face-to-face interviews were undertaken with the main actors of the thesis research. Therefore where telephone interviews were employed, it was mainly to support some of the main arguments being made by key actors that had been interviewed through face-to-face engagement (Section 3.4).

3.3.2 Policy Documentary Analysis

Section 3.3 has explained that a useful way that documents can be examined is through applying discourse analysis, which concerns an examination of 'what people do' (Potter, 2006, p. 202). The purpose of this section is to draw attention to: how policy documents were collected as a distinct stage in the research process; the usefulness of using documentary materials; and the type of documents drawn upon for analysis, rather than how they can be examined through applying discourse analysis. Policy documents have been collected to greater extents through a reading of the grey literature on sustainable development and around CTCC which has drawn attention to key documents to read. Furthermore, by directly reading policy documents, links have been made to others that require an examination. For example, reading local authorities Climate Change Action Plans, Community Strategies, Sustainable Community Strategies, and Community Plans have drawn attention to other related policy documents. In a similar vein, by reading International, EU and central government documents and legislation concerning sustainable development, climate change, and community planning, attention has been drawn to a range of policy documents. Moreover, in some instances it has been during interviews that practitioners have directed the researcher to key documents that should be examined.

Documentary materials can be used in conjunction with other qualitative methodologies (e.g. SSIs) or in their own right as a means to assimilate knowledge to address the

research questions. Where documents are used in conjunction with other qualitative methodologies, Hoggart et al., (2002) explain that documentary analysis allows for extending data collection beyond that which is achievable through interviews or direct observation. For the researcher this can allow for an increase in the validity of knowledge in addressing the research questions, a reduction in the gaps in knowledge, and an understanding of the processes taking place behind the scenes. As an example, documentary materials are 'often drawn on to cross-check the oral accounts, or to provide some kind of descriptive and historical context' (Atkinson and Coffey, 2006, p. 59). Within the context of the Ph.D research, where policy documentary analysis has been used in conjunction with SSIs it has proven to be useful for four reasons. First, in identifying key actors to interview, for example, those involved in the policy process (see Sections 3.4 and 3.4.2) for both Sustainable Community Strategies and Climate Change Action Plans. A policy map of actors was developed from literature reviews and documents around the policy areas of analysis (see, for example, Section 3.4.2). This is a method used to identify key actors that fit the criteria for examination, for example, key practitioners that might be involved in climate change networks of a region that can be identified and contacted for the SSIs (see, for example, Figure 3.6). In turn, by situating actors within a policy map of key roles and responsibilities, there has been an understanding of the partnerships and networks that such actors might be involved in with regards to the development and/or implementation of Climate Change Action Plans and Sustainable Community Strategies.

Second, documents that have been produced and published from actors at international, national, and local scales of governance have been collected and analysed (Section 3.3.3) as part of the research process and drawn upon in the preparation of questions for SSIs. Therefore, documentary materials have been used before, during, and after the interview process: documents have been drawn upon to identify key actors involved in the policy process and have been used to background information before interviews; and they have been examined after the interviews to shed further light on the policy practitioners own stories. To illustrate, some of the practitioners highlighted that climate change was not being addressed by their authority, and browsing through planning policy documents have highlighted that this is not statutory (Section 3.4.2).
Third, documentary materials have been used to bring some articulation to the inter-woven stories of the respective practitioner's involvement in the development of

Climate Change Action Plans and Sustainable Community Strategies (SCSs). It was not uncommon for the practitioners interviewed across all four case studies to comment on the complexity of local government. Practitioners pointed out that if they did not really understand how various strategies, partnerships and respective actors involved in them came together and/or were linked into Climate Change Action Plans and SCSs, it was ambitious for a person (i.e. an external researcher) not actively involved in the policy process, to make sense of it all. It was for this reason that a collection and an exploration of documentary materials was extremely useful to help situate the practitioners respective roles in policy processes, in terms of what they should be doing. To illustrate, there is a complex nature and range of targets, performance indicators, partnerships, and strategies that are associated with SCSs. Therefore, a number of documents that have been produced and published from actors at international, national, and local scales of governance that directly or indirectly refer to SCSs have been identified and examined to see how they are related. This has been to bring some coherence and articulation to respective practitioner's roles, stories, and involvement in developing and delivering on SCSs. For example, an examination of policy documents has provided information about the role of central government, government officers of the regions, the regional assembly, and the key departments in local government in the development of SCSs. To name but a few, documents examined include: the guidance on 'Preparing Community Strategies' (DETR, 2000); the 'Egan Review' (ODPM, 2004a), a document which provides further insight on re-branding Community Strategies as Sustainable Community Strategies; guidance on 'Local Strategic Partnerships' (DETR, 2001); the UK Government's 'Sustainable Development Strategy' (HMSO, 2005), and the Local Government Act 2000. In a similar vein, documents produced and used by actors at international, national, regional, and local levels have been collected and examined concerning climate change adaptation as a policy area of analysis. As with SCSs, Sections 1.1, 3.4 and 4.1 discuss in greater detail some of these documents.

Fourth, documentary materials had been collected so that they could be analysed to understand how the discourses and content of documents have shaped actors actions and decisions. Similarly, documents have been explored to understand how actors perceptions influence the content and discourses of policies, strategies, and so forth. Documents have, for example, been used to understand: the drivers of CTCC; the

importance and promotion of PL/PT and the use of best practice in achieving sustainable development objectives; and the role of CTCC in community planning and climate change adaptation.

Documentary materials can also be used 'as data in their own right' (Atkinson and Coffey, 2006, p. 59), as they have been in the production of this thesis, to inform knowledge in addressing the research questions. However, the use of documentary materials is not limited to an examination of the content and facts contained within them. Rather, an examination 'of how documents are produced, circulated, read, stored and used for a wide variety of purposes' (Atkinson and Coffey, 2006, p. 57) should be undertaken. Atkinson and Coffey (2006), for example, explain that documentary materials:

> Have their own conventions that inform their production and circulation. They are associated with distinct social occasions and organized activities (Atkinson and Coffey, 2006, p. 59).

Therefore, documents 'are not only produced, but also, in turn, are productive' (Prior, 2006, p. 84) as they can galvanise further action - for example, documents clarify the use of legislation and its implementation, and can show what has been decided and the action that should be carried out by policy-makers. As Atkinson and Coffey (2006) note, documents:

> Can be used to do the sort of work that is currently popular among policy makers: setting achievement targets and measuring outcomes. Such political and organizational work is impossible without the construction of documentary facts and realities (Atkinson and Coffey, 2006, p. 61).

Some documents have been examined that discuss the history of how and why key strategies have emerged at a particular point in time - for example, the emergence of concerns about sustainable development, and the recognition as to the importance of CTCC to address this (Section 4.1); or why Sustainable Community Strategies are seen to be important by central government and local authorities to addressing sustainable development initiatives in local governance, such as is highlighted in the Egan Review (ODPM, 2004a).

Furthermore, analysing documents as data in their own right has been useful for considering the purported significance of sustainable development, networks, partnerships and best practice in local policy-making that have been developed and used by the EU, central government, regional institutions and local authorities. Furthermore, whilst reading through a range of policy documents for the Ph.D project, the researcher noted how it was possible for practitioners to draw on policies, ideas, and goals within these documents, for example, to use in policy learning and policy transfer (Chapter Five this thesis) that have been produced by somebody else.

Despite the usefulness of documents in social science research, it is important to be aware of the epistemology of documents concerning their validity of knowledge when analysing them. Four points are noted in the methodology literature about this. First, documents may be limited, partial, and inaccurate (Creswell, 1994; Hoggart et al., 2002; Robson, 2003), Thus, caution needs to be given about taking at face value the facts that they stipulate because 'we cannot treat records – however "official" - as firm evidence of what they report' (Atkinson and Coffey, 2006, p. 58). Furthermore, documents can portray a sense of knowledge that looks like the full picture is captured, and can be biased in representation which can be deliberate (Hoggart et al., 2002). Second, the researcher has a responsibility to be aware that he/she can be biased in interpretations of the documents when analysing them (Hoggart et al., 2000). Third, consideration has to be given to whether the documents are causes of the social phenomena that are being analysed, or are reflections of them (Creswell, 1994; Hoggart et al., 2002; Robson, 2003). This point links to the one by Sharp and Richardson (2001) that there is difficulty in linking text to outcomes when applying discourse analysis to them. Sharp and Richardson (2001) suggest, for example, that the Foucauldian discourse analysis approach may produce limitations on understating outcomes, as it focuses on processes of how discourses compete. In short, whilst documentary materials are useful for situating historical events, highlighting actions that have taken place and featuring scope for future action, caution should be given to their usefulness for explaining processes of interaction. They do not suffice in explaining how policy learning and policy transfer takes place to produce an outcome, for example, the production of a policy. Thus, it is important to supplement documentary analysis with SSIs to analyse the relationships of the actors in the policy process with other actors and institutions in the lead up to the policy outcome. As Atkinson and Coffey (2006) explain:

> Documentary sources are not surrogates for other kinds of data. We cannot, for instance, learn through written records alone how an organisation actually operates day by day (Atkinson and Coffey, 2006, p. 58).

Fourth, documents are unlikely to provide direct answers to the questions the researcher is interested in (Robson, 1993). However, this is not necessarily a problem if the researcher is interested in what the documents say, rather than looking for particular information on answers. The next section discusses how the case study data analysis was undertaken.

3.3.3 Transcribing and Coding – Data Analysis

All the evidence from the SSIs was recorded and transcribed. Whilst transcribing is a lengthy process, it has proven to be useful for the formal analysis of the evidence gathered, and it was done verbatim. Furthermore, where dashed dots ('. . .') are used within the quotes by actors interviewed throughout the thesis, this indicates where the interviewee paused during speech. In contrast, where dashed dots have been cited in policy documents and the grey literature, then this implies that some words have been left out. Interviews and policy documents have undergone the same procedures of analysis. The first stage was to identify codes that were relevant to the research questions under which key quotes and statements from the survey findings, SSIs and policy documents could be analysed for coding. Codes are labels for themes and categories that emerge from the data set. They concern classifying important meanings which come together to form themes or answers to the research questions. Approaching the empirical evidence with preconceived ideas of codes based on the background knowledge of the subject area and the use of research questions can bias the selection of codes and subsequent knowledge gathered (Jones, 1985).

However, Alan (2002) and Jones (1985) note that common sense should prevail – the researcher should adopt a systematic approach whilst considering that new categories may emerge. Furthermore, the codes that are used should relate to the data in a context so that links can be made between the research questions and the empirical material. The coding system used with the SSIs and policy documents underlying this thesis was 'open coding'. Attention was paid to the actors' understanding of suggested themes,

their own emerging themes, and questions and ideas (Punch, 2005, p. 214). Categories were primarily based on the literature reviews concerning the role of CTCC within the conceptual governance body of literature that discusses the 'hollowing out' (Rhodes, 1997), restructuring of the state (MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999), the shift from government to governance (Jessop, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003), policy learning (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Rashman and Hartley, 2002), and lobbying (Bulkeley et al., 2003) debates. However, these categories have been modified in line with evidence gathered from the empirical data. An example is that a number of interviewees identified that there is an important role for supra-national, national, and regional actors in meta-governance (Jessop, 2000) and hierarchical principles that impact upon the governing of CTCC (Chapters Five and Six). Hence categories to cater for this in the analysis were introduced.

The evidence gathered was coded into three main themes around the research questions (of which a number of codes under sub-themes were developed before and after the transcribing of interviews). The first theme is the reasons as to why local authorities were involved in the policy area of analysis (adaptation or community planning). Examples of sub-themes include the role of legislation, funding, and political will of the authority. The second theme is the means of co-operation that local authorities are involved in. Sub-themes include domestic and transnational means of engagement – twin cities, project working, partnerships, formal and informal networks. The third theme concerns the governing processes of CTCC. Sub-themes include PL/PT, the use of best practice, and lobbying to influence policy outcomes and for funding opportunities. From this system of coding, four main documents in relation to the respective case studies were produced using the coded themes to structure them. In the writing of the thesis these four respective case study documents were draw upon.

Coding is used in relation to discourse analysis (Section 3.3) because the quotes and statements from the range of interviews and documents drawn upon are categorised and analysed under the different themes and sub-themes as appropriate. As an example, a narrative emerges as to how the development of policies, policy processes, and power struggles take place between the various actors concerning CTCC. Information can be gathered that can show critical policy events and processes that can explain the operation and effects of the various discourses highlighted. Analysis of the interviews

and policy documents under the themes/codes can produce knowledge about the extent to which CTCC is suggested to take place on the ground, and is occurring; the rhetoric and practical drivers of local authority partnerships and networks; the relative importance of CTCC in addressing sustainable development objectives in both rhetoric and practical terms and an exploration of the various truths given for the success or failure of CTCC. Computer programs such as 'Nvivo' can help in coding important themes. However, the coding has been undertaken by hand. This is because it was considered by the researcher that by undertaking coding by hand a sense of tangibility to the data material (transcripts and policy documents) would be, and was, provided. For example, in terms of reading and re-reading through the material to highlight and identify existing and emerging coded themes/sub-themes. In short, this has allowed for a holistic perspective of the narratives to be seen and explored, that feeding key words and sentences into a computer program may not have provided. The next section introduces the four case studies in practice.

3.4 The Case Studies in Practice

The field work for each of the four case studies was two weeks in each location (Figure 3.1). Because of time constraints, the SSIs were arranged in advance, albeit the 'snowballing technique' was employed as actors were also approached during the field work for interviews. Snowballing is a method of gathering data from a small sample population. It is defined by Valentine (1993) as 'contacting one participant via the other' (Valentine, 1993 cited in Brown, 2005, p. 48). In other words, snowballing involves 'a series of referrals that are made within a circle of people who know each other' (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981 cited in Brown, 2005, p. 48). Brown (2005) notes that the snowballing technique is often employed where the research subjects are hidden to avoid discrimination, for example, because of their sexuality or drug addiction. However, it is also a very simple, economical, efficient, effective and informal way of drawing on relevant respondents to address research questions (Davies, 2007). Within the context of the Ph.D, for example, interviewees that had been identified from a review of the literature concerning climate change adaptation or community planning as the policy areas of analysis, recommended colleagues or other personnel that should be contacted for further analysis in the research. As an illustration, the Local Strategic

Partnership (LSP) Manager of Plymouth City Council suggested that the Corporate Performance Manager of Plymouth City Council should be contacted to discuss policy learning in CTCC (Chapter Five this thesis). Nevertheless, Brown (2005) notes that 'snowball sampling can be seen as a biased sampling technique because it is not random and it selects individuals on the basis of social networks' (Brown, 2005, p. 51). However, the subjectivity of qualitative methodology (e.g. as has been discussed in Section 3.1) can mean that specific groups need to be targeted to address research questions, for example, those involved in climate change adaptation or community planning. A problem with snowballing could be that if the researcher does not get on well with the interviewee during an interview then the latter may be less inclined to suggest to the interviewer the name of a relevant contact for further analysis in the research (Brown, 2005).

Within the context of the Ph.D research, participants seemed happy to pass on any contact details that they might have. Another issue is that as with most sampling techniques there is a reliance on actors 'willingness to be involved in research and consequently some people will always be excluded' (Brown, 2005, p. 53). The researcher was aware of this and there were only a limited number of times that potential participants could not be involved in research. In such instances alternative individuals were contacted that undertook similar job roles – for example, those who were second in command rather than the head of services – who could shed some light on the practices of CTCC, and have provided useful and insightful knowledge to address the research questions.

There were five common phases to approaching the SSIs across all the case studies. First, a main point of contact was identified from the survey feedback that wished to be involved in a case study and in SSIs. Second, a policy map of actors was developed from literature reviews and documents around the policy areas of analysis (see, for example, Section 3.4.2). This is a method used to identify key actors that fit the criteria for examination, for example, key practitioners that might be involved in climate change networks of a region that can be identified and contacted for the SSIs (see, for example, Figure 3.6). Hence, whilst this method is a distinct stage in the research process, it has not been used in the research in the same way that discourse analysis has, which concerns an examination of 'what people do' (Potter, 2006, p. 202).

Third, these actors were approached in the first instance by an official letter highlighting: the nature and importance of the research (as endorsed by BSHF and ESRC); why they were considered important for involvement in an interview (i.e. their knowledge and expertise) and how the data would be used. In some instances, the enquiry desk of the local authority was telephoned directly to clarify contact information for the relevant actor. Fourth, the official letter was followed up by a telephone enquiry concerning the possibility of an interview, and an interview was arranged. Hoggart et al., (2002) note that it may be difficult to reach elites because they might be uninspired by students' lack of experience and knowledge. In the context of this PhD research, the main problem with contacting the elites seemed to be getting hold of them as they have many competing demands on their time. In most instances the elites seemed happy to be involved in the research as they have an interest in sustainable development practices, and were interested in the research being undertaken. In some cases, interviews took place over the phone because the actors suggested they were unavailable for an interview, or that a telephone interview would suffice as the amount of information that they could provide was not worthy of a face-to-face interview. As an example, some actors said they were not involved in the policy areas of analysis or CTCC – despite documentation suggesting that they should be – and provided the reasons as to why this may be. Typically telephone enquiries did not constitute an interview, but the information they provided is nevertheless useful to the main themes being explored. Where face-to-face interviews took place, they lasted for between one and two hours. Between nine and twelve face-to-face interviews were undertaken for each case study with key actors, plus a number of telephone interviews.

Figure 3.1 Case Study Locations within the UK

Source: adapted from http://Maps.google.co.uk [accessed 28th October 2007].

Fifth, some actors were telephoned in relation to follow up enquiries concerning quotes and statements that they had made during the interviews that required further detail, meaning, or clarity. The four case studies are introduced below. First, community planning as one of the main policy areas of analysis is introduced and explored. The two case studies - Plymouth City Council and Aberdeen City Council - that are used in the analysis of this policy area are also introduced, and the methodology for the selection of the actors to be interviewed in these case studies is explained. Second, in a similar vein, the main policy area of climate change adaptation is introduced and examined. The two case studies affiliated with this policy area - Peterborough City Council and Northumberland County Council - are introduced, and the methodology for the selection of actors to be interviewed in these case studies is explained.

3.4.1 Community Planning and Related Case Studies

Section 3.2.1 has highlighted how community planning is seen by the survey respondents to be an important area of analysis to be explored. Within England and Wales, the main document which addresses community planning is the Community Strategy. In Scotland this is known as the Community Plan. The Sustainable Community Strategy and Community Plan are portrayed by central government as being a key means to implementing sustainable development initiatives within local authorities' administrative boundaries. Thus, the survey findings suggest that local authorities are looking to others to draw on policy learning to address this. The purpose of the Community Strategy is:

> To enhance the quality of life of local communities and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK through action to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area and its inhabitants (DETR, 2000, p. 5).

In England and Wales, Community Strategies have been made statutory through the Local Government Act 2000:

> Part I of the Local Government Act 2000 places on principal local authorities a duty to prepare "community strategies", for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas, and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK. It also gives authorities broad new powers to improve and promote local well-being as a means of helping them to implement those strategies. Part I of the Act came into force on 18 October 2000 (ODPM, 2004a).

Community Strategies were later re-named as Sustainable Community Strategies (SCS) as suggested by the Egan review (ODPM, 2004a). This was to draw greater emphasis to 'how sustainable development can be used to promote economic prosperity in the area, to promote and benefit social cohesion and enhance environmental quality' (Egan Review, 2004. p. 36: 2.16). In Scotland, Community Plans have been brought in through the Scotland Local Government Act 2003 (Scottish Executive, 2004). The guidance describes the two main aims of Community Planning as:

- Making sure people and communities are genuinely engaged in the decisions made on public services which affect them; allied with

- a commitment from organisations to work together, not apart, in providing better public services (Scottish Executive, 2004, p. 1).

In this respect, the guidance for Scotland's Community Plans is based on parallel principles to that of the SCS (see ODPM, 2004a; Scottish Executive, 2004). Community Strategies are considered by central government to allow for more effective local policy-making and greater participation by drawing on a range of local actors to identify needs and wants, and to deliver the services within a city (Raco et al., 2006). They are a long term vision statement for an area that sets the agenda for priorities (i.e. crime, housing, education) (Table 3.2). As such, they are suggested to be the overarching framework for other initiatives at the regional, local (e.g. Neighbourhood Renewal Fund partnerships, and Local Area Agreements), and neighbourhood level (DETR, 2000; ODPM, 2004a; Tewdwr-Jones, 2006). Therefore, running alongside the National SDS and underpinning it, the UK has its own 'hotchpotch' of local level initiatives. The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is a framework for various working partnerships at local level to reduce social exclusion, and catalyse urban regeneration and renewal.

Table 3.2 Key Objectives and Components of Community Strategies

Objectives

1 To allow local communities (based upon geography and/or interest) to articulate their aspirations, needs, and priorities.
2 To coordinate the actions of the local authority, and of the public, private, and voluntary and community organisations that operate locally.
3 To focus and shape existing and future activity of those organisations so that they effectively meet community needs and aspirations.
4 To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, both locally and more widely, with local goals and priorities relating, where appropriate, to regional, national, and even global aims.

Components

1 A long-term vision for the area, focusing on the outcomes that are to be achieved.
2 An action plan identifying shorter term priorities and activities that will contribute to the achievement of long-term outcomes.
3 A shared commitment to implement the action plan and proposals for doing so.
4 Arrangements for monitoring the implementation of the action plan, for reviewing periodically the community strategy, and for reporting progress to local communities.

Source: Raco et al., (2006, p. 477).

Central government has encouraged local authorities to be involved in Community Strategies by working through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) with private sector and civil society actors in the geographical area that they are responsible for to address local needs and concerns. LSPs are non-statutory, multi-agency partnerships that:

> ... brings together at a local level the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together (DETR, 2001, p. 4).

Perhaps a significant step-change in the introduction of Community Strategies is that unlike LA 21 and the criticisms associated with this (Chapter Four), they are embedded into mainstream policy-making as they are supposed to have long term strategic planning at their core. There is ambiguity and therefore flexibility and relative autonomy in how to address local needs and concerns by LSPs as Community Strategies are suggested to range from vision-like statements to more detailed content (DETR, 2000; ODPM, 2004a; Raco et al., 2006; Tewdwr-Jones, 2006). Therefore, Raco et al., (2006) suggest that the SCS 'proposals have the potential to bring about one of the most significant shifts in the governance of local areas in any state in Western Europe' (Raco et al., 2006, p. 477).

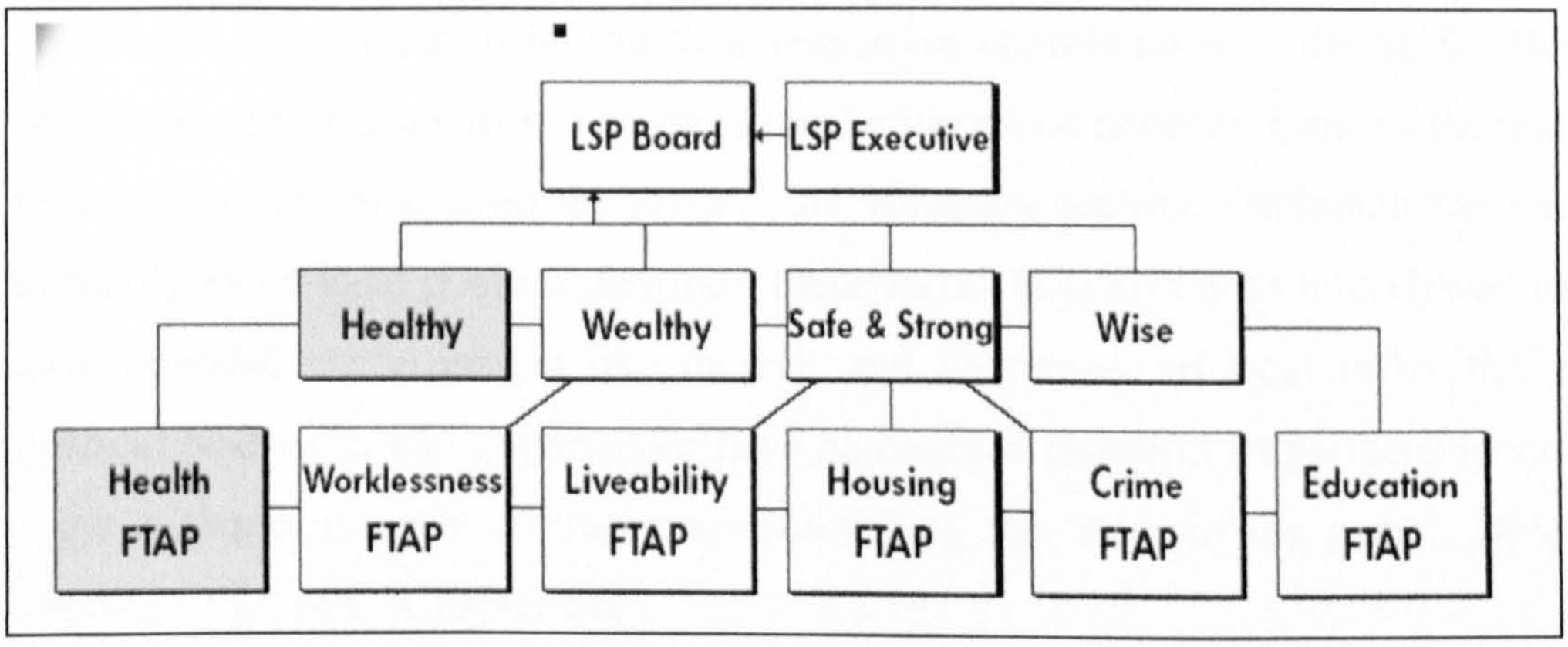
Plymouth City Council

The first case study that has been explored in relation to community planning through the SCS is Plymouth City Council. Plymouth (Figure 3.1) is the biggest city in the County of Devon, and the largest one based on the south coast. The population is 240,718 (NOS, 2001), and covers an area of 30 square miles. The council aims to turn 'Plymouth into a vibrant. European waterfront city by the year 2020' (Audit Commission, 2006, p. 6). This in itself is ambitious considering that it is part of the central governments Neighbourhood Renewal Programme. Hence there are areas of extreme deprivation. The governance model of the City Council is structured on a leader and cabinet structure that was adopted in 2002. There are eight posts within the cabinet covering a range of portfolios. At the time of writing, Plymouth City Council's SCS was being developed by the Senior Environmental Sustainable Development

Policy Officer and the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Manager[11]. This was in consultation to various degrees with the main actors of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) (Plymouth 2020 Partnership).

The LSP is structured around four main themes: healthy, wealthy, safe and strong, and wise (Figure 3.2). These are governed by four respective sub-partnerships of local authority officers and private and/or voluntary sector actors that address these themes: health partnership with the National Health Service; economic growth with the private sector; safety and crime reduction in the community with the police, and the Plymouth Community Planning Partnership (PCC); and education with schools. These sub-partnerships, and a range of partnerships beneath, have a number of aims and objectives that feed into those of the SCS and which address the priorities of the Local Area Agreement (LAA). An LAA is a three year (renewable) contract agreement between central government and members of the LSP concerning the priorities of a local area and the means as to how best to address these. The SCS should be developed and delivered through an LAA. Furthermore, the sub-partnerships below the four key healthy, wealthy, safe and strong, and wise partnerships are centred on the respective Neighbourhood Renewal Floor Targets. These are targets that help the LSP to achieve the overall objectives of the partnership theme. The means to address the targets of a policy area (e.g. crime reduction) are outlined in a Floor Target Action Plan (FTAP) (Chapter Five).

Figure 3.2 Towards an SCS Through the Plymouth 2020 Partnership



Source: adapted from Plymouth city council.gov[12]

[11] Plymouth City Council has subsequently published their SCS in April 2007.
[12] http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/communityandliving/plymouth2020/lspstructure.htm 'LSP Structure' [accessed 5th July 2006].

Aside from the Senior Environmental Sustainable Development Policy Officer, and the LSP Manager, the main co-ordinator or the second in command for each of the sub-partnerships was the principle point of contact for interviews. Alternative approaches would have been to have contacted the actors responsible for specific FTAPs partnerships under each of the themes, or those at the LSP Board/Executive level. However, these approaches were not undertaken because it was expected that the main co-ordinators would have broader knowledge of both a strategic and operational understanding of the links, types, processes, and objectives of CTCC and the SCS than could be found by accessing the organization at a lower or higher point of entry. Nevertheless, at the suggestion of the main actors interviewed, through the 'snowballing' technique, actors at the Board/Executive and FTAP levels have been interviewed as appropriate. Furthermore, actors from the Governance Office have been interviewed as the Community Strategy guidance (DETR, 2000) notes that they should have a steering meta-governing role in the production of the SCS (Chapter Six). Furthermore, practitioners in each of Plymouth City Council's policy departments have been contacted about CTCC and the SCS (Figure 3.3). This is because the SCS is a cross-cutting spatial plan that should involve actors in its production and delivery across a number of policy areas (Cowell and Owens, 2006; Haughton and Counsell, 2004; Raco et al., 2006; Tewdwr-Jones et al., 2006).

Moreover, as an overarching framework, the SCS will have a number of partnerships feedings into it. These require exploration to provide further insight into the extent to which (and how) actors within these partnerships might draw on CTCC to develop knowledge as a means to inform their respective contributions to the SCS. Because developing the SCS involves a range of local governance partners, some of the main co-ordinators have come from the private and voluntary sectors. Although the thesis is primarily about local public authorities, these actors have also been interviewed as they have provided useful insight into the role and importance of local authorities in the political landscape, and in particular have highlighted problems of partnership working – for example, the role of trust and establishing the 'rules of the game', which are important to CTCC (Chapter Six).

Figure 3.3 Main Actors Interviewed in the Plymouth City Council Case Study

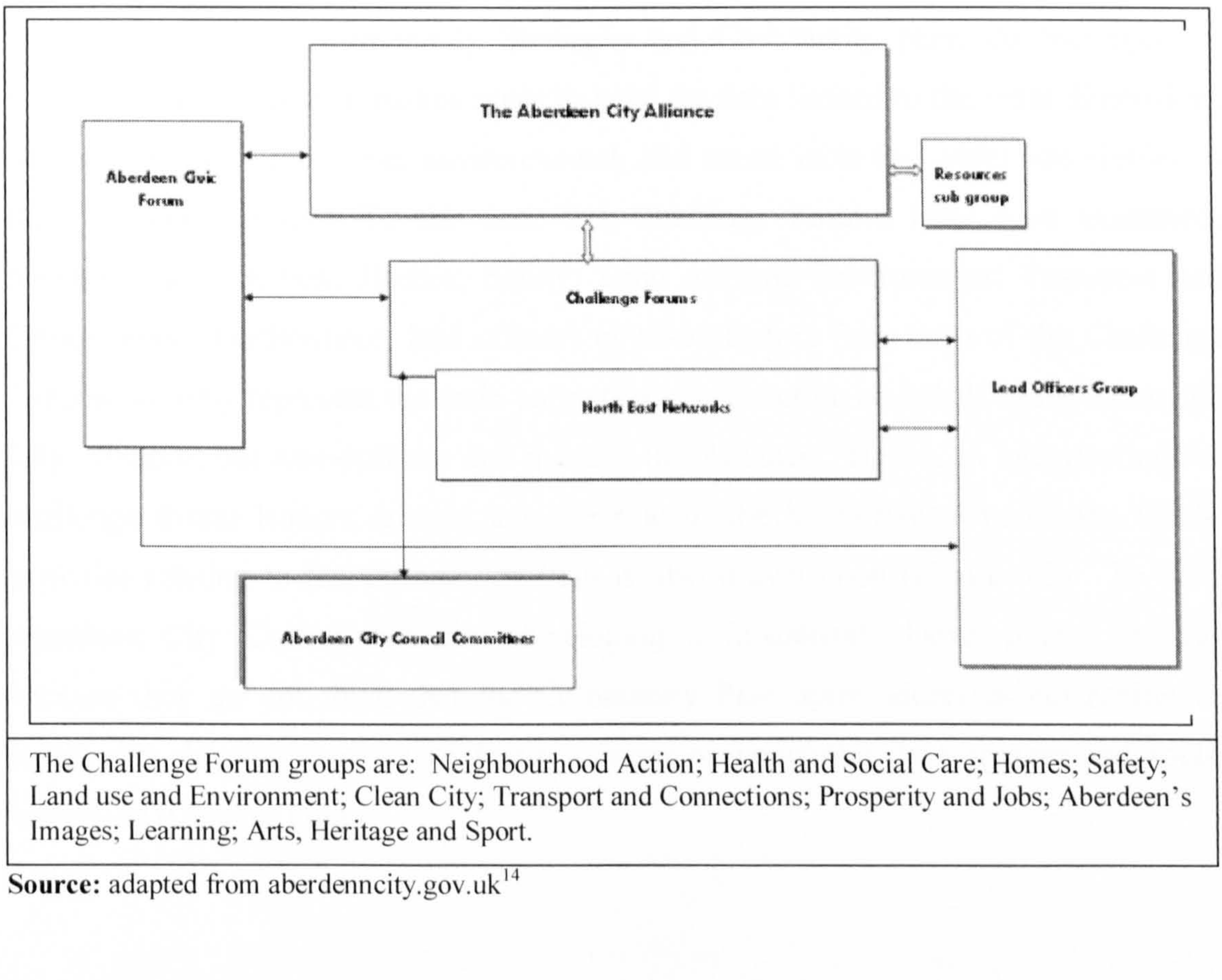
Title of actor, and role in relation to the SCS	Institution	Contact technique
Leader of Plymouth County council (and Chair of LSP).	Plymouth City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Senior Environmental Policy Officer (and LSP Environment & Sustainability Partnership policy officer).	Chief Executive Department, Plymouth City Council	Face-to-Face interview
LSP Manager	Chief Executive Department, Plymouth City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Police Officer (and LSP co-ordinator for safe and strong partnership - the 'safe' part of this).	Plymouth City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Assistant Director (and LSP assistant co-ordinator of the safe and strong partnership - the 'strong' part of this).	Plymouth Community Partnership	Face-to-Face interview
Manager of economic regeneration (and LSP assistant co-ordinator of the Wealthy partnership)	Plymouth City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Health practitioner (and LSP co-ordinator of Health partnership)	NHS, Plymouth	Face-to-Face interview
Chief Education Adviser (and LSP Co-ordinator of the Wise partnership)	Plymouth city council	Face-to-Face interview
Corporate Performance Manager	Plymouth City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Senior Policy Officer	Government Office South West	Telephone interview
Neighbourhood Renewal Consultant	(Department for) Communities and Local Government	Telephone enquiry
Policy Officer	Sustainability South West	Telephone enquiry
Policy Officer	South West Regional Assembly	Telephone enquiry

Aberdeen City Council

The second case study that has been explored through community planning is Aberdeen City Council. Aberdeen City is a port in the North-East of Scotland (Figure 3.1) with a

population of 184,788[13]. It covers an area of 73 square miles. It has a strong economy that is supported by the oil industry – as such it is regarded as one of the most affluent UK based cities outside of London. Aberdeen City Council's (Sustainable) Community Plan (Aberdeen City Council, 2001) was published in 2001. Key actors in its development were the Community Planning Manager and the Senior Environmental Policy Officer of the environmental and planning department. They consulted to various degrees with the main actors of the Aberdeen Cities Alliance (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4 Aberdeen Cities Alliance Structure



The Challenge Forum groups are: Neighbourhood Action; Health and Social Care; Homes; Safety; Land use and Environment; Clean City; Transport and Connections; Prosperity and Jobs; Aberdeen's Images; Learning; Arts, Heritage and Sport.

Source: adapted from aberdenncity.gov.uk[14]

One of the Alliance's main roles has been to develop the Community Plan and to be involved in reviews of this, and its delivery. Hence, the Cities Alliance is not dissimilar to the functioning and purpose of LSPs in England and Wales. However, the structure

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[13]http://www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/browser/profile.jsp?profile=Population&mainArea=Aberdeen+City&mainLevel=CouncilArea 'Aberdeen City Council Area' [accessed 15th June 2008].

[14]http://www.communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/Internet/TheAberdeenCityAlliance/ACAIntroduction.asp [accessed 5th May 2007].

is considerably different to Plymouth's LSP which means that the key actors and policy areas that have direct relevance and importance to the Community Plan will differ to those involved in Plymouth's SCS. For example, unlike Plymouth's LSP structure which has four main policy themes and partnerships, the Cities Alliance has eleven (Challenge Forums) and associated targets under these which have to be addressed.

Nevertheless, to allow for some consistency across both these community planning case studies, the main co-ordinators or lead officers for the Cities Alliance that are involved in similar policy areas to Plymouth's LSP four key sub-partnerships were contacted and interviewed. The Plymouth structure, for example, does not include sports, culture, or leadership. Because Community Strategies and Community plans do encompass a number of policy areas, it makes sense to keep the data limited to the main dimensions of sustainability - economic, environmental, and social inclusion which are similar to the Plymouth themes. To this end, five Challenge Forums have been examined: Neighbourhood Action; Homes; Safety; Land use and Environment; Transport and Connections. Furthermore, lead officers or co-ordinators from each of the Challenge Forums not only represent the main partners and take action on behalf of the Aberdeen City Alliance, but also-ordinate and manage the Alliance. Hence, in interviewing the challenge forum leaders, insight into the role of the board/Executive in any CTCC activities relating to the Community Plan is also drawn upon (Figure 3.5). To date, Aberdeen City Council are also developing a Sustainable Development Strategy because they do not think that the Community Plan aptly addresses environmental sustainable development, as its focus is more on economic development and social inclusions (Chapter Four).

Figure 3.5 Main Actors Interviewed in the Aberdeen City Case Study

Title of actor and role in relation to the Community Plan	Institution	Contact technique
Senior Environmental Policy Officer (and former leader of the environmental challenge forum)	Aberdeen City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Community Planning Policy Officer (and leader of the neighbourhood planning challenge forum)	Aberdeen City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Principal Community Planning Manager (and overseas the Community Plan reviews).	Aberdeen City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Community Planning Policy Officer (Responsible for the Community Plan reviews for Aberdeenshire Council)	Aberdeenshire Council	Face-to-Face interview
Area Director (and member of Cities Alliance)	Communities Scotland	Face-to-Face interview
Chief Executive (and member of Cities Alliance)	Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organizations	Face-to-Face interview
Housing Strategy Officer (and leader of the local housing strategy challenge forum)	Aberdeen City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Sustainability Co-ordinator	Aberdeen City Council	Face-to-Face interview
Sustainable Officer	Hampshire County Council	Telephone interview

3.4.2 Climate Change Adaptation and Related Case Studies

Climate change adaptation is a policy area of importance as it is under political scrutiny and local authorities are looking to learn from other authorities as to how to address this (Section 3.2.1). Both Peterborough City Council and Northumberland County Council, in principle at least, have demonstrated that they are committed to adaptation – for example, they have both voluntarily signed the Nottingham Declaration. This is more than a symbolic gesture as it is a Declaration that states the local authority will respond at the local level to climate change in contributing to the national Climate Change

Programme, and will prepare a Climate Change Action Plan with their respective local communities (LGA, 2004). Peterborough signed up to the Declaration because a scoping exercise identified the city is at potential risk of vulnerability to flooding in some areas from extreme storms (Interviews, 2006: PECT Consultant; Environmental Director, Peterborough City Council; EERA Consultant). For Northumberland, there is a realization that climate change as a policy area has not been sufficiently addressed in the North East Region in general, and needs to be taken forward (Interviews, 2006: GONE Policy Officer; Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Northumberland County Council; Environmental Executive, Northumberland Strategic Partnership; Renewable Energy Executive, Northumberland County Council).

Climate change 'refers to any change in climate whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity' (IPCC 2001, p. 982). As advocated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UK government is using a two-pronged approach to climate change: 'mitigation action' to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to lessen the future effects of climate change (Allman et al., 2004; ODPM, 2004b), and 'adaptation action' to address the impacts. Adaptation strategies are required to adapt to the climatic changes that will be associated with climate change even though mitigation strategies can help to limit the worst impacts (DEFRA, 2004; Hulme and Turnpenny, 2004; Smit and Pilifosova 2001; UKCIP, 2003a; West and Gawith, 2005). Smit and Pilifosova (2001) define adaptation as:

> Changes in processes, practices or structures to moderate or offset potential damages, or to take advantage of opportunities associated with changes in climate. It involves adjustments to reduce the vulnerability of communities, regions, or activities to climatic change and variability (Smit and Pilifosova, 2001, p. 881).

There are a number of types of adaptation but the two main types referred to by IPCC and in International, European, and UK government policy-making are 'building adaptive capacity', and 'delivering adaptation actions' (Adger et al., 2005; DEFRA, 2005; Interviews 2006: DEFRA Policy Officer; IPCC, 2001; UKCIP Policy Officer). 'Building adaptive capacity' is about allowing for the '... regulatory, institutional and managerial conditions for individuals, groups and organisations to have the necessary

skills to allow for adaptation actions to be implemented' (HMSO, 2006, p. 130). Examples of this include policy guidance, legislation and regulation from central government (Chapter Four). 'Building adaptive capacity' also relates to research, training, awareness raising, and changing attitudes (UKCIP, 2003b). 'Delivering adaptation actions' is action that implements operational adaptation decisions (HMSO, 2006). Examples include: increasing reservoir storage capacity or restricting housing development in areas of high flooding risk (in light of predicted climate change modelling scenarios), and to develop a range of flood proofing measures for existing properties (DEFRA, 2005; GLA, 2005; UKCIP, 2003a).

The climate change literature (Lim et al., 2005; Shackley and Deanwood, 2002) and policy documents (IPCC, 2001; ODPM, 2004b) highlight that adaptation is the responsibility of national governments through 'building adaptive capacity'. The same literature and policy documents suggest that regional and sub-regional actors have an important role in 'delivering adaptation actions' because these are the appropriate scales to carry out practical strategies and solutions. Without effective adaptation, climate related risks and damages will increase. Hence, one of the policy drivers of building adaptive capacity and delivering adaptation is contingency planning, taking into consideration '... the costs incurred by failure to adapt compared to the costs of adapting' (DEFRA, 2005, p. 25)[15]. Furthermore, responding after an event has occurred is also a form of adaptation ('re-active planning') (Adger et al., 2005). Local Authorities have an important role in climate change adaptation because they are responsible for a wide range of services in a number of policy areas (Table 3.3) that can both be influenced by and influence the impacts of climate change (Allman et al., 2004; DEFRA, 2005; Interviews 2006: DEFRA Policy Officer; Shackley and Deanwood, 2002; Strategic Planner, Peterborough City Council; UKCIP Policy Officer UKCIP, 2003a).

[15]The Association of British Insurers (ABI, 2005) has undertaken extensive research into adaptation costs. They suggest that within the government sustainable community's growth areas, flood damage per year could be £54.6 million without implementation of flood mitigation measures. DEFRA (2005) provide an appraisal of costs incurred to the National Health Service if heat related impacts of climate change (i.e. food poisoning, skin cancer, and dehydration) are not aptly considered (i.e. through awareness raising, building design to maximize natural ventilation, or provision of tree cover for shade).

Table 3.3 Potential Impacts Upon Local Authority Sectors and Adaptation Responses

ECONOMY, LEISURE AND TOURISM (POTENTIAL IMPACTS)	ADAPTATION RESPONSES	TIME FRAME
Changes in climate may increase in demand for some products and services (e.g. tourism and leisure services, climate change related technology, etc.)	Ensure that climate change risks and opportunities are taken into account in economic development plans/strategies. Review Tourism Strategies to ensure they take account of climate change impacts.	Act now/Plan for the future
Economic development may be constrained in areas vulnerable to flood risk	Work with other partners to put in place land use planning policies that address climate change impacts on economic development	Plan for the future
EMERGENCY PLANNING (POTENTIAL IMPACTS)	ADAPTATION RESPONSES	TIME FRAME
Likely significant increase in costs and demand for services as a result of extreme weather events, in particular flooding	Ensure appropriate allocation of resources and equipment for emergency planning	Act now
	Update the existing emergency plans to respond to increasing frequency and extent of extreme weather events and flooding	Act now
PLANNING, BUILDINGS AND ESTATES (POTENTIAL IMPACTS)	ADAPTATION RESPONSES	TIME FRAME
Damage costs to buildings from extreme weather events and flooding	Adapt properties to make them more resilient to flood damage and ensure siting does not exacerbate flood risk	Act now/plan for the future
	Update/build sustainable flood defenses, and locating new development in high-densities away from areas of high risk	Act now/plan for the future
Higher temperatures leading to increased demand for cooling and ventilation	Improve ventilation, cooling and shading in Council owned properties	Plan for the future
Possibility of water shortages during hot, dry summers	Include water conservation measures in new build and retrofit existing stock.	Act now/plan for the future
	Promote water conservation measures such as use of 'grey water' and rain water harvesting	Act now/plan for the future
TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE (POTENTIAL IMPACTS)	ADAPTATION RESPONSES	TIME FRAME
Traffic disruption from more frequent extreme weather, particularly flooding	Identify infrastructure at risk from flooding, and plan to re-site infrastructure as necessary and plan routes to minimize disruption	Plan for the future
Warmer winters with reduced risk of frost	Reduced need for road salting (cost savings)	Plan for the future
Landslips following heavy rainfall, disruption to overhead lines during storms, etc.) will impact on traffic management	Prepare emergency plans to manage road traffic in the event of a major disruption to rail services	Act now
WASTE SERVICES, POLLUTION CONTROL, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (POTENTIAL IMPACTS)	ADAPTATION RESPONSES	TIME FRAME
Some impacts on handling and disposal of putrescible materials (e.g. odour and vermin control during warmer summers)	Ensure that waste contractors take into account warmer temperatures in the design and management of waste sites	Act now
	Consider the need for more frequent collections and street cleaning	Plan for the future
HEALTH SERVICE PROVISION (POTENTIAL IMPACTS)	ADAPTATION RESPONSES	TIME FRAME
Potential increases in heat related deaths and incidence of heat related illness due to more frequent extremely hot days	Provide advice to vulnerable groups on how to stay cool	Act now
Potential increase in deaths and severe injuries during more frequent storms and flood events	Introduce better warning systems	Plan for the future

Source: Adapted from East of England's Sustainable Development Round Table (EESDR) (2002, p. 17-18), and United Kingdom's Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) (2003b, p. 4-5).

However, regional and national 'actors' cannot be excluded as adaptation is both a multi-sectoral and multi-scalar (i.e. community, district, county/sub-regional, regional, national tiers) governance issue. Climate change is not isolated from other social or economic events (Adger et al., 2001; IPCC, 2001; UKCIP, 2003a). Therefore a local and regional partnership governance approach is required to be added to adaptation to avoid duplication, and to allow for a co-ordinated response. At the local level, the planning department of local authorities has a lead role in both 'building adaptive

capacity' and in 'delivering adaptation actions'. Examples are facilitating higher density development in non-flood risk areas; encouraging low-cost flood resilience measures into the design of buildings and using flood risk assessments for developments in flood risk areas (ABI, 2005; Dluholecki, 2004). Whilst the above discussion highlights that local authorities have an important role in addressing climate change adaptation, the closest that it comes to being statutory for them at the present time is through Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS 1) 'Delivering Sustainable Development':

> Regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should ensure that development plans contribute to global sustainability ... and take climate change impacts into account in the location and design of development (ODPM, 2005: PPS 1, principle 13 ii).

Likewise, Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 25 'Development and Flood Risk' (ODPM, 2004c) and PPS 11 (formerly PPG Note 11) 'Regional Planning' (ODPM, 2004d) may directly or indirectly give consideration to climate change adaptation. National planning policies are set-out by central government in PPS, PPGs, Minerals Policy Statements (MPSs) and Mineral Planning Guidance Notes (MPG), Circulars and Parliamentary Statements. Friends of the Earth (FOE) note that '... PPSs are guidance and not law' (FOE, 2005, p. 2). However, they explain that all local authorities must take PPSs into consideration when developing their local plans and when deciding on planning applications. Moreover, as Wilson (2005) and the case-study findings suggest, the PPS guidance is ambiguous, using words such as 'should' rather than 'must' – hence, the emphasis that they *have* to address adaptation is reduced. Further ambiguity can be seen in the use of Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) and Sustainability Appraisals (SAs); with the term 'sustainability' so vague and contested, it can be interpreted in a number of ways (Counsell, 1998; EA, 2004; Haughton and Counsell, 2004; Owens, 1994; Rydin, 2003;)[16]. As such, adaptation can often be

[16] The European Union directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' requires SEAs to be undertaken by local authorities on certain policies, plans and programmes. The purpose of this is to identify, assess, mitigate, and monitor any significant environmental effects. Furthermore, opportunities should be made for stakeholder consultation/concerns on the plans and programmes SEAs are incorporated into Sustainability Appraisals (SAs). Under UK legislation (the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), an SA must be prepared for regional and local development plans. They are similar to SEAs, but include an assessment of social and economic

excluded from SEAs and SAs, as the following statements taken from the Peterborough case study illustrates:

> We do not really consider climate change as there is not much on it from government guidance in the SEA ... which is ... this is mainly about the mitigation side, congestion, and road safety (Interview, 2006: Transport Planning Officer, Peterborough City Council).

> Sustainability Appraisals probably need to take into account climate change far more than they have done in the past. You could argue we do not have time ... but I do not think that climate change is entrenched within the planning system as yet (Interview, 2006: Strategic Planner, Peterborough City Council).

Since the interviews with practitioners, there has been the publication of a consultation document that has been updated and published as a 'Planning and Climate Change Supplement to PPS1 (DCLG, 2006)[17]. The consultation document does take into consideration the role of SAs and SEAs, although the guidance is still quite vague – for example it uses terms like 'should' rather than 'must' and it does not provide a definition as to how or specifically where the SAs and SEAs can be applied:

> Sustainability appraisal (incorporating strategic environmental assessment) should be applied so as to shape planning strategies and policies that support the Key Planning Objectives set out in this PPS (DCLG, 2006, p. 14)[18].

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inputs and effects alongside the environmental ones. As such, SAs are a policy instrument for ensuring that sustainable development objectives are drawn into main-stream planning. http://sea-info.net/content/sectors.asp?pid=40 'Spatial Planning - Legislation and Guidance' [accessed 15th August, 2007].

[17] The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is now called Communities and Local Government (CLG).

[18] The key planning objectives as outlined in the PPS (DCLG, 2006) include delivering on the Government's climate change programme, pursuing economic development whilst considering the impacts and effects of climate change, and responding to the concerns of climate change.

Peterborough City Council

Peterborough city council was the first thesis case study where an analysis of climate change adaptation and CTCC was undertaken. Peterborough is situated in the East of England (Figure 3.1) in Cambridgeshire. The city has a population of 156,000 people (NOS, 2001), but is identified as a growth area in a revision of the Sustainable Communities Plan (ODPM, 2006). Therefore, Peterborough continues to expand with new housing developments. It is a regional centre for commerce, industry, transport and leisure. The council became a unitary authority in 1998 when it gained autonomy from Cambridgeshire County Council. It adopted a leader and cabinet political governance model in 2001.

The city was chosen as one of the UK's four 'Environment Cities' in 1992 by a group of national environmental organisations led by the Royal Society of Conservation Wildlife Trusts. Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) is the main organization responsible for environmental development in the city, and was established the following year to help achieve this commitment. Hence, although the responsibility for developing Peterborough City Council's Climate Change Action Plan lies primarily with the Director of Environmental Services for Peterborough City Council, he works closely with policy actors from PECT. Peterborough City Council has also drawn on the expertise of a policy officer from ESTAC (Energy Savings Trust Anglia). At the time of writing the Climate Change Action Plan was in the early stages of development. A review of climate change adaptation literature has been undertaken to develop a policy map of the actors most likely to be involved in this. Figure 3.6 provides a useful diagram to aid understandings of the various actors that can be involved in a climate change policy network. The diagram provided an explicit basis to search for individuals to interview (Figure 3.7). Additionally national actors have been interviewed including those from the United Kingdom Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP), and the climate change adaptation department of Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

Figure 3.6 A Policy Network for Climate Change in the East of England Region

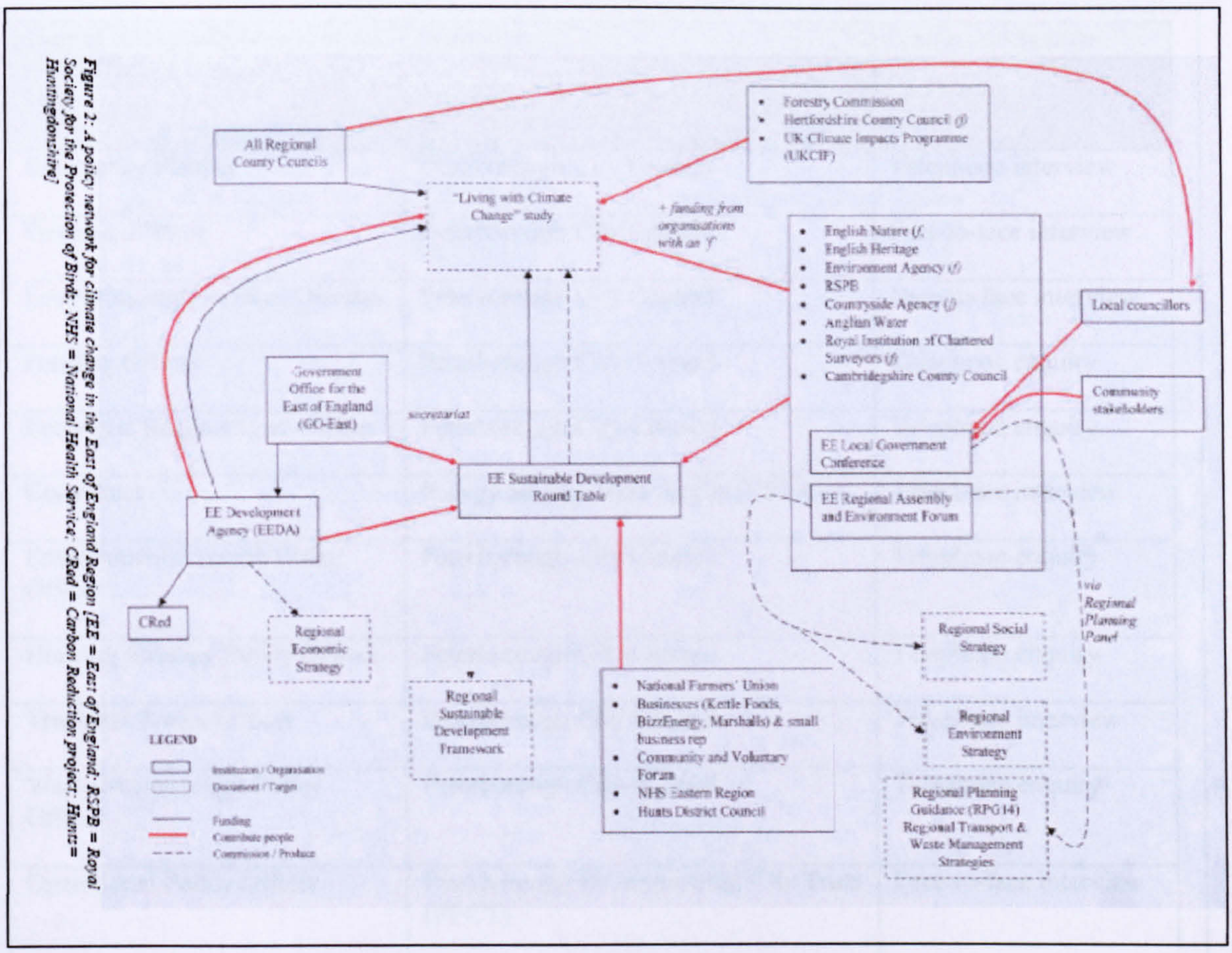

Figure 2: A policy network for climate change in the East of England Region [EE = East of England; RSPB = Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; NHS = National Health Service; CRed = Carbon Reduction project; Hunts = Huntingdonshire]

Source: Turnpenny et al., (2005, p. 9)

Figure 3.7 Main Actors Interviewed in the Peterborough City Council Case Study

Title of actor and role in relation to the Climate Change Action Plan	Institution	Contact technique
Emergency Planner	Peterborough City Council	Telephone interview
Strategic Planner	Peterborough City Council	Fact-to-face interview
Environmental Services Director	Peterborough City Council	Face-to-face interview
Funding Officer	Peterborough City Council	Telephone enquiry
Economic Regeneration Officer	Peterborough City Council	Telephone enquiry
Consultant	Energy Saving Trust Anglia (ESTAC)	Telephone interview
Environmental Health Policy Officer	Peterborough City Council	Telephone enquiry
Housing Strategy Policy Officer	Peterborough City Council	Telephone enquiry
Transport Policy Officer	Peterborough City Council	Telephone interview
Waste Management Policy Officer	Peterborough City Council	Telephone enquiry
Operational Policy Officer	Peterborough Environmental City Trust (PECT)	Face-to-face interview
Chief Executive	PECT	Face-to-face interview
Climate Change Officer	Cambridge County Council	Face-to-face interview
Chief Executive	East of England's Regional Development Agency	Face-to-face interview
Consultant	East of England's Assembly	Face-to-face interview
Policy Officer	Government Office East of England	Face-to-face interview
Policy Officer	Sustainability and Energy Department of the Local Government Association (LGA)	Telephone interview
Climate Change Policy Officer	Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	Face-to-face interview
Climate Change Policy Officer	Environmental Agency, East of England	Face-to-face interview
Climate Change Policy Officer	UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP)	Face-to-face interview

Northumberland County Council

The second case study that has been examined through climate change adaptation is Northumberland County Council. Northumberland is one of the largest counties in the UK and is located in the North East of England (Figure 3.1). It is mainly rural in nature – for example, a quarter of the county is designated as a National Park, and so is principally protected from development and agriculture. Therefore, despite its population of 307,186 (NOS, 2001), the total land area of almost 2000 square miles means the population density is very sparse. However, the urban south east corner of the county is where more than half the population live in less that five per cent of the total land area. The biggest towns are situated here, which includes Morpeth, which is where Northumberland County Council is based. For Northumberland County Council, there are two Strategic Policy Officers from the Strategic and Environmental Policy Unit that are responsible for the development of its Climate Change Action Plan. In a similar approach to the actor identification in the Peterborough City Council case study, these have been identified from literature reviews, policy documents, website material of the local authority, and the 'snowballing' effect (Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8 Main Actors Interviewed in the Northumberland County Council Case Study

Position in relation to the Climate Change Action Plan	Institution	Mode of interview
Senior Environmental Policy Officer (and main actor responsible for producing the Climate Change Action Plan	Northumberland County Council	Face-to-face interview
Renewable Energy Executive	Northumberland County Council (and Northumberland Strategic Partnership)	Face-to-face interview
EU Funds Officer	Northumberland County Council	Telephone interview
Economic Regeneration Department Manager	Northumberland County Council	Telephone enquiry
Transport Planning Officer	Northumberland County Council	Telephone enquiry
Environmental Senior Policy Officer	Northumberland Strategic Partnership	Face-to-face interview
Environmental Health Department	Tynsdale District Council	Telephone enquiry
Housing Strategy Officer	Tyndsdale District Council	Telephone Interview
Sustainability Policy Officer	Government Office North East (GONE)	Face-to-face interview
Policy Officer	One North East Regional Development Agency	Telephone interview
Policy Officer	North East Assembly	Face-to-face interview
Environmental Councillor	Northumberland County Council	Telephone enquiry
Policy Officer	Energy Saving Trust North East	Face-to-face interview
Policy Officer	Friends of the Earth	Face-to-face interview
Policy Officer	Sustainability and Energy Department of the Local Government Association	Telephone interview
Climate Change Officer	DEFRA	Face-to-face interview
Climate Change Policy Officer	Environmental Agency North East	Telephone interview
Climate Change Policy Officer	UKCIP	Face-to-face interview

Despite the suggested importance of contingency planning by local authorities for the reasons above, the case-study research has highlighted that adaptation may not be effectively addressed by the two case study local authorities. When practitioners from the Peterborough City Council case study were asked about the extent to which they were considering adaptation within their policies, their responses were not positive as the quotes below illustrate:

> That is very forward thinking (laughter) (Interview, 2006: Economic Regeneration Department, Peterborough City Council).

> See the Emergency Planning Department they will deal with the impacts of climate change (Interview, 2006: Environmental Health Department, Peterborough City Council).

The Emergency Planning Department was no more insightful concerning progress in adaptation:

> Emergency Planning have no expertise in prevention policies only expertise in respond/recover ... it is more about current in your face responses such as avian flu or temporary morgues. Adaptation is not considered a priority as it is not a defined threat of immediacy (Interview, 2006: Emergency Planning Manager, Peterborough City Council).

In short, the Emergency Planning Department only responds to events, and does not plan for them. However, this is a form of 'contingency planning' as an adaptation strategy, for example, by responding to a flooding event. Findings from the Northumberland case study also suggest that Northumberland County Council (and their districts) have a long way to go in addressing adaptation as the quotes below illustrate:

> I think to be honest with you in Northumberland we are still not really taking climate change as seriously as we should be (Interview, 2006: Environmental Executive, Northumberland Strategic Partnership).

Within the housing strategy, environmental objectives will be low down ... climate change is not an immediate crisis, but a crisis is however about dealing with 1600 homeless people who require having a permanent roof over their heads ... climate change can wait until tomorrow ... but affordability is a current problem that needs to be addressed (Tynsdale District, Strategic Housing Officer, Interview, April, 2006) (Northumberland County Council case study).

There are three main reasons as to why adaptation is not being taken up by these local authorities which may be a broader point in relation to other local authorities. First, it is a relatively new policy area within the UK and will take time to embed itself into the other policy sectors (DEFRA, 2005; HMSO, 2006; Interview, 2006: DEFRA Policy Officer). Second, adaptation is not a statutory requirement that local authorities are required to address. Third, relates to the risk of outlaying financial costs against something that practitioners are unsure how to plan for. For example, there are criticisms in the literature (Dessai et al., 2005 citing Downing, 2003; Wilson, 2005) that the regional climate change scenarios for the UK (UKCIP02 scenarios) (see Hulme et al., 2002) are too vague, the spatial resolution for analysis too broad, and the accuracy of them both unknown and disputed. Moreover, the UKCIP02 model scenarios suggest that the worst impacts are not likely to occur until 2080, and the scenarios are not going to be revised until 2008 (HMSO, 2006). Hence, there is a suggestion that adaptation does not have to be considered in the policy-making process and local plans until nearer this time. DEFRA are reluctant to make adaptation statutory for two reasons: (1) it is difficult to make a 'one size fits all' adaptation strategy and (2) adaptation needs to be addressed through a voluntary consensual self-organizational approach, as hierarchy will not work (Interview, 2006: DEFRA Policy Officer).

3. 5 Conclusions

This chapter has introduced the three main methods of the research. It has explained their relevance to the aims and objectives of the research, and the research questions. The significance of the methods to the underlying theory of this thesis have been highlighted. Thus, this chapter has acted as a bridge in the linking of the theory

underlying this thesis and the subsequent substantive chapters that analyse the empirical survey findings and the SSIs and policy documents within the context of four case studies. Furthermore, this chapter has shown that there are a number of challenges to researching CTCC which have been considered in the adoption of the qualitative techniques. The case studies have been introduced and have provided an indication as to how the main policy areas of analysis (community planning, and climate change adaptation) are being addressed by local authorities and the main actors involved in this. This has set the scene for understanding the types of actors that are likely to be involved in CTCC in these policy areas of analysis. The next chapter is the first of three substantive chapters that explores the role of CTCC as a characteristic in the environmental political landscape. It starts the debates on the role of CTCC by exploring how the formal political landscape is being structured, and examines the experiences of local authorities involved in CTCC in this landscape.

Chapter Four: The Emergence and Extent of CTCC

This chapter highlights three main arguments concerning the emergence and extent of CTCC that is taking place in the political landscape. These arguments are important to this chapter because they can help to explain the reasons for the emergence of CTCC and the extent to which this is taking place on the ground. First, there are a multitude of CTCC drivers - factors that have mobilized CTCC - which have come from a range of institutions. From the top-down, the United Nations has promoted the importance of Local Agenda 21 (LA 21). The EU has encouraged CTCC to take place to address local sustainable development through a range of its funded programmes; and central government has used the Best Value regime to facilitate mandatory benchmarking exercises between local authorities as a means to continuously improve on delivery of their local services (Section 4.1.3). CTCC has also been mobilized from the bottom-up through associations of municipalities. Local authorities that are members of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) are interested in policy learning and the use of best practices between each other. The Council of European Municipalities (CEM) later renamed the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) has driven twin city arrangements as it wanted to maintain peaceful relations between nation states. Together, these range of drivers suggest that CTCC is an important governance phenomenon, because of the ways that it is promoted and is encouraged to take place. As a publication by UN-habitat on the role of local governments and international development co-operation in relation to the EU suggests:

> In Europe, trans-European co-operation between local and regional authorities has become over the years an essential element of the overall system of 'network governance' (UN-habitat, 2006, p. 7).

Second, the formal drivers of CTCC are not as significant as they have been in past studies, for example the role of LA 21 and European structural funds programmes - rather there are other drivers of CTCC. The role of cities working together to continuously improve on their local services as a CTCC driver, for example through the use of Best Value, is not recognized in the CTCC literature (e.g. Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Stone, 2004). 'Formal' refers to a procedure that is carried out in accordance with rules and convention. In contrast, 'informality' implies that the procedure is unofficial, more personal, relaxed, easy going, flexible and fluid

(Elliott, et al., 2001). There are also a range of informal drivers of CTCC that have been mobilized through associations of municipalities. As with formal drivers of CTCC, informal ones act as an incentive to facilitate engagement between local authorities. However, these relate more to the role of actors and the structure of the network/partnership – for example, the development of inter-personal relationships, a personal interest to be involved in CTCC, and informal relations (in terms of interaction and networks) between actors.

Third, PL/PT is documented in the empirical literature (Coleman Perl, 1999; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Rashman and Hartley, 2002) and the thesis substantive findings, as a key governing process of CTCC, rather than its lobbying roles (i.e. to influence policy-making and its outcomes at the supra-national and national level, and in applying for funding resources of supra-national and national institutions) (Chapters Two and Five). This may reflect that PL/PT is seen by policy-makers to be the main governing process of CTCC in addressing local sustainable development objectives. PL/PT is seen by policy-makers to be important because it can contribute to more effective local policy-making as a means of addressing local sustainable development objectives (Chapters Two and Five). The thesis findings show that local authorities co-operate through self-organizational networks, hereby discussed also as 'governance networks' (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Section 2.2.2) in undertaking PL/PT. However it is argued in this chapter that local authorities' priorities increasingly lie with partnership and network working within cities rather than between them. This has been encouraged through the central governments modernisation agenda (Chapter Five).

The chapter divides into four main sections. The first section examines the emergence of CTCC in the formal political landscape. It introduces and examines the main formal CTCC drivers, and the mechanisms of governing employed, to explore how this phenomenon has emerged. It examines why CTCC is seen to be important in governance. The second section explores the experiences of UK-based local authorities with CTCC. It draws on the empirical survey and case study findings to explore the experiences of the actors involved. It provides an overview of the CTCC that is taking place at three scales (international, EU, and UK) of governance. The third section draws on practitioner's experiences to discuss the reasons as to why they consider

CTCC is created, and why links between local authorities fade. Finally, section four draws conclusions.

4.1 The Emergence of CTCC in the Formal Political Landscape

Mulgan (2005) suggests that within the UK, the 'main drivers of governmental behaviour', to create change are 'budgets, political rewards, [and] targets' (Mulgan, 2005, p. 236-237). Within the context of this thesis, the formal CTCC drivers are factors that provide the impetus for the development and spread of local authority networks and partnerships. They are the reasons behind the promotion of CTCC, for example the potential benefits of being involved in local authority partnerships/networks such as learning outcomes relating to implementing sustainable development, or the financial income obtained from the co-operation. Drivers of CTCC can also concern the requirement to undertake CTCC through legislation. Drivers can be top-down, for example, the impetus to be involved in co-operation comes from the EU institution or central government, or they can be bottom-up, with actors in local authorities motivated to be involved in this. It is more difficult to define and examine informal drivers of CTCC because these are not necessarily recognized as such as they may lack formality and structure such as recognized rules and convention. For example, they concern the development of inter-personal relationships between actors, their interest in being involved in CTCC, and shared goals and visions (Section 4.2.4). As such, informal drivers of CTCC are generally bottom-up ones, as the impetus to be involved in this comes from the actors within the networks and partnerships themselves. In other words, the bottom-up drivers of CTCC concern governing practices that are associated with networks and partnerships (Table 2.1, Chapter Two), but they can be both formal and informal. It is not always clear from the literature that explores the emergence of CTCC (Atkinson, 2001; Ewan and Hebbert, 2007) whether the bottom-up drivers are mobilized because of political influence from a national or supra-national institution, or because local authorities have a general interest in co-operation. Therefore, the drivers of CTCC are not nested but are a framework to understand the emergence and significance of CTCC in the political landscape.

Confusingly, the range of drivers discussed can also concern the mechanisms of governing – for example, some of the CTCC drivers also facilitate governing processes between local authorities. To illustrate, participating in a funding programme to obtain financial income can be both a driver of CTCC and a mechanism that allows it to take place. This is because local authority actors might only participate in networks and partnerships where there is a financial resource that can allow them to, for example, in attending meetings, conferences, field visits, and workshops. In a similar vein, LA 21 is a strategy that provides impetus for CTCC, for example, learning outcomes, but is also a mechanism of CTCC as actors are drawn together through co-operation in developing LA 21 Strategies. In other words, as the reminder of Section 4.1 illustrates, understandings as to what drives CTCC (e.g. funding incentives) and what actually allows for CTCC to take place (e.g. funding resources), can be a complex range of inter-related drivers and mechanisms that overlap, and it is not always possible to differentiate or distinguish between them. To achieve learning outcomes and implement more effective delivery, both drivers and mechanisms of CTCC go hand in hand.

Nevertheless, Table 4.1 provides some examples of the drivers and mechanisms that facilitate CTCC that have been put into categories to provide some clarity. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the key top-down and bottom-up drivers of CTCC discussed in this chapter, concerning networks and partnerships (e.g. twin cities). It highlights the institutions that have promoted these, and whether the drivers concern impetus for CTCC at the International, European, or UK level. The mechanisms of CTCC are also highlighted, and those relating to PL/PT are explored further in Chapter Five. The remainder of Section 4.1 attempts to unpack the key drivers of CTCC at the respective scales of governance that have been identified from the CTCC literature and policy documents. It is important to clarify that CTCC drivers are not just about LA 21. However, LA 21 is frequently referred to in this chapter as it is one of the most documented drivers in the governance literature (Evans and Theobald, 2003; Evans et al., 2005; Lafferty, 2001; Young, 2000) and policy documents (DETR, 1999; European Communities, 1997; UNCED, 2001) concerning transnational and domestic networks. This reasserts its perceived importance by policy-makers and governance analysts alike as a means to achieve sustainability.

Table 4.1 Summary of Policy Drivers and Mechanisms of CTCC

Scale of governance	Institutions	CTCC Drivers	Mechanisms of CTCC
International (Twin cities)	CEM Municipalities	To maintain peace between nations through bottom-up approaches.	Twinning contracts.
	Municipalities within the EU state and African continent	Advancing democratic governance through top-down and bottom-up approaches.	Sponsorship agreements.
	Municipalities between the EU state and Chinese cities	Technological and cultural advancement through top-down and bottom-up approaches.	Practitioners visit other cities.
International (Networks)	IULA	To advance technological and organizational democratic governance reforms through bottom-up approaches.	Conferences and seminars.
	ICLEI	Learning outcomes for local authorities On sustainable development through bottom-up approaches.	Training, conferences.
		Promotion of LA 21 through bottom-up approaches.	LA 21 processes (website material, workshops, conferences held by ICLEI).
	UCLG	Planning and cultural development through bottom-up approaches.	Conferences on best practice and workshops.
	CLFG	Democratic reforms through bottom-up approaches.	Conferences, programmes, projects.
	United Nations	- LA 21 - policy guidance through top-down approaches. Promotion of legal rights in undertaking CTCC through the Cities Alliance Initiative. Top-down approach.	Earth Summit, voluntary contracts by local authorities to participate. Conferences concerning developing contracts between cities to facilitate CTCC.
Europe (Twin Cities)	CEM Municipalities	To maintain peace between nations through bottom-up approaches.	Twinning contracts.
	Council of Europe	Development of policies concerning democratic principles based on the European Convention of Human Rights.	Charter of Local Self-Government.
	European Commission	European Funding programmes to achieve sustainable development (Section 4.1.2). Top-down approaches.	Field visits, co-operation through project-working.
Europe (Networks)	IULA	To advance technological and organizational democratic governance reforms through bottom-up approaches.	Conferences and seminars.
	EuroCities	The larger cities in Europe to have an opportunity to discuss problems and solutions concerning urban governance.	Conferences, workshops, seminars.
	ICLEI	Learning outcomes for local authorities on sustainable development through bottom-up	Conferences, workshops, seminars, charters, LA 21

	European Commission	approaches: -ESCTC. - Aalborg Conference. - Aalborg Charter. - Aalborg+10 network. - LA 21 strategies. To achieve sustainable development at the local level through top-down approaches: - Fifth Environmental Action Plan. - Framework for Sustainable Development. - Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment (pending). - European funding programmes (Section 4.1.2).	strategies. Funding programmes, motivation of individuals and local authorities.
National	Central Government	1999 National Sustainable Development Strategy. Top down approach. Local Government Act 2000 and Best Value (to continuously improve on local services).	Motivation of individuals and local authorities; benchmarking between local authorities.

4.1.1 The Emergence of CTCC Internationally

This section draws attention to the emergence of international town twinning arrangements, international networks and partnerships, and the complexities and range of top-down and bottom-up formal and informal CTCC drivers of these. Whilst the literature on local government international relations is limited, it argues that traditionally international relations have concerned twin city (twin sister) arrangements:

> The roots of the sister-sisters phenomenon can be traced back more directly to the aftermath of the Second World War and the help the British gave European cities devastated by the conflict (Cremmer et al., 2001, p. 380).

Thus, it was only in the aftermath of World War II that formal links between cities really began to develop (UNCHS, 2001). Mayors and councillors would visit cities in other countries as a means to develop and maintain peaceful relations between nations. In an illustration of the importance of bottom-up formal self-organizational network approaches to governing, the earliest twinning links have mainly been promoted by municipal governments themselves. For example, the CEM based in Europe has driven the twinning agenda on an international basis through its original pursuit to maintain peace between nations through the development of a European Federal state (Section 4.1.2). Since the 1980s, twin cities have become more international because these links

have expanded to cities in different regions, for example, between the EU and Africa, rather than within them (i.e. within the EU – Section 4.1.2). Whilst twining links have traditionally been associated with ceremonial and peaceful relations, since the 1980s they have developed to have important strategic and political meaning for local governance. Links have developed and have been driven by the incentive to share knowledge and experience between cities to modernise local government through democratic values (Andreasen, 2001; Atkinson, 2001, Ewen and Hebbert, 2007; Watson, 2000). To protect democratic traditions against Communism, cities from the East and West used 'to compete for the attentions of partners in the Third World' (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007, p. 334). These links were mobilized by the municipalities themselves, and the earliest formal mechanisms of CTCC with African towns took the form of sponsorship agreements. The processes of engagement 'involved practical guidance in assisting political development through seminars and vocational training' (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007, p. 334).

Similarly, during the 1980s and 1990s links with Chinese cities have emerged with European counterparts 'to advance cultural and global understanding' (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007, p. 334). Furthermore, ties with regions of the wider developing world have emerged with cities which experienced mass emigration to Europe during the 1950s and 1960s and have involved sharing western technologies and ideas (Atkinson, 2001; Ewen and Hebert, 2007). It is not always clear from the international relations literature (Atkinson, 2001; Cremmer et al., 2001; Ewen and Hebbert, 2001) as to the respective roles of the United Nations, EU, or the nation state in encouraging the earliest twining links between local authorities. However, many of the drivers of twinning links over the last twenty years have been endorsed by supra-national institutions – for example, the European Commission's role in promoting European funded programmes as drivers and mechanisms to facilitate CTCC (Section 4.1.2). Interestingly, the role of other supra-national institutions in driving twin cities, such as the United Nations for example, is not well documented.

The first sign of the development of formal networks between local authorities actually predates the recognition of formal practices of town twinning. The first internationally representative institution for local authorities was the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), established in 1913, that:

> Laid the basis for networks that still exist and flourish today, networks that antedated the first permanently organised co-operative action between modern nation-states (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007, p. 327).

As with the first formal twinning links, this network has emerged through bottom-up self-organizational approaches to governing, and whilst initially established in Europe, it has spread to have international links. IULA was set up because local authorities within Europe were keen to co-operate in addressing common shared urban problems (Alger, 1999; Ewen and Hebbert, 2007; UNCHS, 2001). IULA promotes knowledge transfer and PL/PT on implementing democratic reforms, and develops municipal relations. It undertakes this through the fostering of a range of conferences 'through which municipal associations worldwide would pool their technical and organizational knowledge' (Ewan and Hebbert, 2007, p. 330). To date, the IULA has nearly 400 local authority or national associations of local government members across 100 countries (Bislev and Salskov-Iversen, 2001).

There are a number of other international associations of municipalities that have also promoted and driven CTCC from the bottom-up. First, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) which is an alliance of local authorities for local sustainable development initiatives. It was established as a result of a United Nations sponsored conference in 1990 (Evans and Theobald, 2003; Lafferty, 2001; UNCED, 1992)[19]. Second, the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is an organization that has over 1000 members in cities across 95 countries. It promotes learning and exchange between local authorities as it funds/supports workshops and seminars on planning and cultural development in association with its network partners (e.g. the Network of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion; and Medcités)[20]. CLGF which has 160 members in 40 commonwealth countries, aims to promote the use of best practices between local governments in the development of local governance[21]. CLGF promotes PL/PT though conferences and events, programmes and projects.

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[19] ICLEI (also referred to as 'Local Governments for Sustainability') was established when more than 200 local governments from 43 countries convened at their inaugural conference, the 'World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future', at the United Nations in New York. http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=global-about-iclei 'About ICLEI' [accessed 19th Marsh, 2008].

[20] http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/uclg/index.asp?pag=template.asp&L=EN&ID=6 'Mission' [accessed 20th March, 2008].

In terms of top-down drivers of networks, the United Nation's role in facilitating and driving these has considerably more recognition than it does in its promotion of town twinning – albeit this has not been prominent until the 1990s. The United Nations has undertaken a steering meta-governing role to either (a) promote the concept of PL/PT; or (b) it more directly governs through drivers of CTCC. Each is discussed in turn. As a promoter of CTCC, the United Nations has used its political influence to encourage the development of governance networks of local authorities by drawing attention to their importance in delivering sustainability. One of the clearest illustrations is its promotion of LA 21 as a driver of PL/PT to deliver sustainable development as a key delivery mechanism of Agenda 21 at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 (Begin, 2004; UNCHS, 2001). The United Nations encouraged member states to sign up to Agenda 21, and to support their local governments in developing LA 21 strategies. LA 21 is promoted in Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 as a local strategic plan that involves two elements. First, LA 21 strategies should be devised by local authorities by drawing on the experiences and knowledge of local governance actors (e.g. private and voluntary sectors) within their cities. Thus, a range of governance actors are involved in processes of policy-making and policy delivery. These actors co-operate to identify local sustainable development concerns and find appropriate solutions. The basis for action is that local authorities employ their local governance powers and resources to facilitate co-operation and co-ordinate action (Lafferty and Eckerberg, 1998); as such they have an internal meta-governing role as they co-ordinate and monitor a range of partnerships under their control (Chapter Two this thesis). The rationale as to why local authorities have the responsibility for co-ordinating LA 21 is because they are considered by international and national policy-makers to be best situated to address local needs and concerns (UNCED, 1992) (see also Chapter One this thesis). The restructuring of the state and the shift from government to governance has given local authorities a prominent role in local governance (Chapter Two this thesis).

Second, LA 21 promotes the role of networks for exchanging best practice between cities to allow for more effective development and implementation of the strategy in the delivery of achieving sustainable development objectives. Therefore from a CTCC perspective, Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 notes that in developing their respective LA 21

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[21] http://www.clgf.org.uk/index.cfm/pageid/47/What+is+CLGF 'The Commonwealth Local Government Forum' [accessed 18th March, 2008].

strategies, local authorities should draw on the experiences and skills of other authorities in policy areas they wish to achieve sustainable development in – for example, the impacts of climate change, or community planning. Local authorities should also take into consideration that knowledge may need to be adapted to suit local conditions (Lafferty and Eckerberg, 1998). LA 21 is not legally binding but forms the basis for the development of international co-operation between local authorities to address sustainable development:

> By 1993, the international community should have initiated a consultative process aimed at increasing cooperation between local authorities (UNCED, 1992, Agenda 21, 28.2: b).
>
> By 1994, representatives of associations of cities and other local authorities should have increased levels of cooperation and coordination with the goal of enhancing the exchange of information and experience among local authorities (UNCED, 1992, Agenda 21, 28.2: c).

There are two problems with measuring the success of LA 21 as a driver of CTCC. First, as the above quotes suggest there is ambiguity created by the United Nations as to what an increased level of local authority co-operation is because this is not defined. Second, the extent to which involvement in LA 21 concerns governance processes within cities, or the CTCC element, is not clear. For example, whilst 'a 2002 survey found that more than 6,400 local governments in 113 countries have become involved in LA 21 activities over a 10-year period'[22], it is not clear if the LA 21 activities concerned processes within cities or the CTCC element. Interestingly, a review of the LA 21 literature highlights that scholars have given attention to exploring LA 21 strategy processes within cities rather than the links between local authorities (i.e. Bond et al., 1998; Kitchen et al., 1997; Lafferty, 2001; Selman, 1998; Young, 1998, 2000). Young (1998, 2000), for example, notes how within the UK the LGMB (Local Government Management Board) (now the Improvement and Development Agency for local government - IDeA) had an instrumental role in promoting LA 21. It used its monthly mailings to its members to draw attention to community participation in LA 21 strategies within cities. Furthermore, Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 does not detail how

[22] http://www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=616&0= [accessed 15th June 2007].

links and processes of policy learning should take place between local authorities to share knowledge, experience, best/good practice (Evans and Theobald, 2003; Lafferty and Eckerberg, 1998; UNCED, 1992). The reasons as to why the literature and Chapter 28 of LA 21 do not draw attention to the processes of engagement between local authorities, are unclear. It is possible that the processes of engagement between local authorities are similar to the way they take place within cities; or that the CTCC element of LA 21 is generally not taking place. It could also mean that the CTCC element of LA 21 is not considered important to policy-making practices by policy-makers (whereas local governance that takes place within cities is). If this is the case then this has implications for understanding the importance of LA 21 as a driver of CTCC in an international policy-making context. However, ICLEI developed the concept of LA 21 with the aim of promoting the importance of LA 21 across Europe:

> ICLEI, through its then Secretary General Jeb Brugmann, was responsible for placing LA21 on the Rio "Earth Summit" agenda in 1992 and, subsequently, the European Secretariat of ICLEI has been centrally involved in promoting the initiative throughout the EU (Bulkeley et al., 2003, p. 248).

Furthermore, there have been two subsequent main international United Nations summits, the first of which has drawn attention to promoting the CTCC element of LA 21. The Istanbul Habitat II cities summit in 1996 recognized that local authorities should draw on the expertise of each other through LA 21 processes:

> Local action should be guided and stimulated through local programmes based on Agenda 21, the Habitat Agenda, or any other equivalent programme, as well as drawing upon the experience of worldwide cooperation initiated in Istanbul by the World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities, without prejudice to national policies, objectives, priorities and programmes (UNCHS, 1996, p. 3).

This is to share ideas about how to make partnerships work more effectively with local governance actors in the development and planning of shelter schemes, education, health centres, fresh water, and infrastructure. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg 2002 reaffirmed the importance of LA 21 through the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. However, LA 21

was redefined as Local Action 21; the intention was to accelerate implementation of sustainable development initiatives within the city (Evans and Theobald, 2003; WSSD, 2004). Whilst the United Nations has an important role in promoting LA 21 as a driver of CTCC, this has also been promoted by the associations of municipalities themselves. In other words, there has been a combination of top-down and bottom-up self-organizational network approaches to undertaking governance through LA 21 strategies in international relations. To illustrate, the facilitation of LA 21 has been supported by international associations of municipalities such as ICLEI, albeit this organization works in partnership with the United Nations, for example, through UN-habitat Agenda[23].

As a further illustration that the United Nations recognises the importance of CTCC practices beyond LA 21, it has facilitated this through its City Alliance Initiative which is supported by UN-habitat and the World Bank[24]. The Cities Alliance Initiative is a global coalition of cities (local authorities and local governance partners) that work together through strategies and the implementation of slum-upgrading programmes to improve the living conditions of the urban poor. The United Nations and World Bank have both supported conferences and workshops for local authorities to attend on CTCC. For example, they held a workshop in Seville in 2007 to draw attention to creating legal agreements between local authorities involved in co-operation practices. The rationale of creating legal agreements is to create some stability in the governing practices between local authorities should there be government changes in national or local institutions because of elections or changes in staff involved in the co-operation that can compromise the engagement (UN-habitat, 2006). Establishing the 'rules of the game' to drive forward co-operation between actors is well documented in the governance networks literature (Jessop, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003), and is explored further in Chapter Six.

Three important points emerge from the above concerning the complexity of drivers of CTCC internationally. First, the fact that CTCC has been mobilized through

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[23] http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=779 'Partners' [accessed 14th August 2008].

[24] UN-habitat is the United Nations Human Settlements Programme. Its objective is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, and as such has been promoted in the various summits that it has organized. It has the goal of 'providing adequate shelter for all'. http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=1 'About Us' [accessed 10th July, 2008].

associations of municipalities and undertaken on a voluntary basis by local authorities ties in with the role of Type II CTCC discussed in Section 2.3, and understandings of self-organizational approaches to governance (CEC, 2001c; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Schout and Jordan, 2005; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a) (Section 2.1.3). That is, sub-national actors voluntarily participate in networks to address sustainable development. Second, CTCC is not just about PL/PT to develop local strategies; it is also about co-operation between local authorities internationally. Third, given the recognized importance of LA 21 by international and national policy-makers, it is not clear why this has not become statutory. There is the argument that member states are not committed to the environmental dimension of sustainable development principles as this can compromise economic development/growth (Young, 1998; 2001).

4.1.2 The Emergence of CTCC through the EU Institutions

As with initiatives in international relations, this section draws attention to the emergence of town twinning arrangements and networks/partnerships; the complexities of top-down and bottom-up formal and informal CTCC drivers of these; and contradictions in how twin cities/partnerships/networks are seen by policy analysts to govern or be governed. Ewen and Hebbert (2007) note that post World War II twin city arrangements within the EU have been promoted in three main ways. The first relates to formal bottom-up approaches to governing. For example, to achieve its intentions of a Federal European State and to increase the autonomy of local democratic government, the CEM – an association of municipalities that established itself as an organization in Geneva in 1951 – drew up standardised twinning contracts as a mechanism to facilitate town twinning links during the early 1950s. The contracts encouraged cities to be involved in exchanges relating to schools, sports clubs, and cultural institutions (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007). Ties between cities have since become more innovative; anniversary celebrations can involve banquets, music concerts, sports competitions, and exhibitions. The backdrop of this has been the cold war era – the intention was to create some solidarity and to promote democratic modes of governance. As with international relations in the post cold war era, activity has increased between cities to include the developing and sharing of knowledge concerning the modernisation of local government.

Second has been through the meta-governing role by the nation states. Nation state members of the Council of Europe – which was founded in 1949 – encouraged twinning links between local authorities as a significant way of developing European integration. A driver of twinning links is the Council of Europe's Charter of Local Self-Government which was established in 1985 (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007). The Charter means that local authorities have a legal right to co-operate with each other within their own and other European Union states. In practical terms, it encourages CTCC in the sharing of knowledge and experience relating to self-governing of local government through democratic principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights (1950). Third, twin city initiatives have increasingly been facilitated through top-down drivers, by access to European Union funds under the control of the European Commission. For example, 'Measure 1.2 the thematic networking of twinned towns' is a funding scheme promoted by the European Commission as a means to facilitate policy learning through conferences and workshops[25]. Given the promotion of twinning links by the European Commission, it is not surprising that Europe has more twin cities than anywhere else in the world:

> Europe has the world's highest density of town twinning, and had more than 30000 signed agreements by 2003 (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007, p. 334).

Conditional European funding programmes provide support to an array of twinning links, partnerships, and networks that is explored later in this section where the role of the European Commission as meta-governor is discussed. Significant drivers of networks have also taken place through formal bottom-up approaches to governing; a range of associations of municipalities have co-ordinated themselves to self-govern. In the aftermath of World War II, for example, the IULA (Section 4.1.1) played an instrumental role in rebuilding Europe from the bottom-up (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007) as it held a number of conferences in cities in different European nations. Furthermore, the CEM did not just concern the promotion of twin cities in its aims of a Federal European State, but was a network of local authorities throughout European nation states (Ewen and Hebbert, 2007). Local authorities mobilized themselves to establish EuroCities in 1986, which is a network of the larger cities of national states in Europe. It has more

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[25] http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/programme-actions/doc30_en.htm 'Twinning towns for unity' [accessed 4th August 2008].

than 130 members in over 30 countries. EuroCities is a platform through which its members exchange ideas and experiences, explore solutions to common problems through forums, working groups, activities, and events. It has connections with the European institutions such as the European Commission and Parliament to represent cities' common concerns in a range of policy areas[26].

As an example of the emergence of CTCC that specifically relates to environmental governance, the European Commission funded the creation of the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign (ESCTC), and the Aalborg Charter that was launched in 1994 as a result of the Aalborg Conference in Denmark. The driver of this was to facilitate policy learning between local authorities so that they could address sustainable development objectives in their localities more effectively. Nevertheless, in an illustration of the complexities of top-down and bottom-up CTCC drivers, a range of local authority networks had an integral role in setting up the ESCTC and the Charter. Examples include, but are not limited to, the EU branch of ICLEI, CEMR, Cities Alliance, and Energie Cities. The Campaign and Charter had the intention of facilitating LA 21 processes in Europe (Begin, 2004; European Communities, 1997). By 2007, over 2500 European local and regional authorities had signed up to the Charter27.

The ESCTC had temporarily ceased to formally function at the time the empirical field research was undertaken between 2005 and 2006 due to withdrawal of funding from the European Commission. However, it was re-launched in 2007 and built around a partnership between nine local authority networks and financially and politically supported by four campaign funders, rather than the European Commission. The partner organisations are the Association for Cities and Regions for Recycling (ACRR), Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), Climate Alliance, Energie Cités, ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives)28, Medcities,

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[26] http://www.eurocities.org/main.php 'Co-operation' [accessed 8th June, 2008].

[27] http://www.aalborgplus10.dk/default.aspx?m=2&i=372 'List of Signatories' [accessed 8th February 2008].

[28] In 2003, ICLEI's Members voted to revise the organization's mission, charter and name to better reflect the current challenges local governments are facing. The 'International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives' became 'ICLEI—Local Governments for Sustainability' with a broader mandate to address sustainability issues.

The Union of the Baltic Cities(UBC), World Health Organisation Healthy Cities, and Italian Association for Local Agenda 21. The Campaign is funded by the Italian Association for Local Agenda 21, City of Malmö, City of Hannover, Barcelona City Council and Diputació of Barcelona. Practitioners within the campaign work within and across the networks providing knowledge, expertise and the tools for the creation of sustainability policies, and sustainability plans through supporting local governments in addressing local sustainability. The networks have continued to support the implementation of LA 21 principles as discussed at the Rio Summit in 1992, the original Aalborg Charter, and the implementation of the revised Charter though the Aalborg Commitments[29].

At the time the empirical research was undertaken the informal Aalborg+10 network (Chapter Five) had been set-up by associations of municipalities (for example, ICLEI Europe, the City of Aalborg, and CEMR) to drive the revised Aalborg Charter called the Aalborg commitments, which they started in 2004[30]. Thus, whilst the Aalborg+10 network has close links with ESCTC which promotes the Aalborg commitments on its website and has co-organised Aalborg commitment events through its secretariat, they are two distinct networks, for example, the organisers are different. To join Aalborgplus10, members sign-up to ten commitments 'to secure more sustainable lifestyles and polices in their municipalities' (Evans et al., 2005, p. 6), which are informed by the central themes and principles of LA 21. To date, there are 560 full signatories and 43 of intent[31]. As Section 2.1.1 has discussed, the 'hollowing out' (Rhodes, 1997), restructuring processes, and changing nature of the nation state have allowed for the emergence of a 'new political economy of scale' (Jessop, 2002, p. 11; 2005) at the supra-national and sub-national tiers of governance. However, the extent to which local authorities have driven the CTCC agenda through the opportunities provided to them through the restructuring of the European national states, and/or have responded to opportunities provided by the EU, is not clear from the academic literature

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[29] http://sustainable-cities.eu/index.php 'Welcome to the portal of the ESCTC - The European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign' [accessed 21st December 2008].

[30] http://www.aalborgplus10.dk/default.aspx?m=2&i=338 'From Charter to Commitments' [accessed 7th October, 2007].

[31] http://www.aalborgplus10.dk/default.aspx?m=2&i=308 'List of signatories' [accessed 14th September 2008].

that documents the emergence of CTCC (Evans et al., 2005; Ewen and Hebbert, 2007; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Martins and Pearce, 1999). Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 encourages associations of municipalities to support the emergence and spread of LA 21 in regions as it recognizes the importance of local authorities in facilitating these processes. To encourage the uptake of LA 21 by local authorities, the European branch of ICLEI has used its website to promote case studies of how this has been undertaken in different cities across Europe[32]. However, the examples on the website highlight LA 21 processes within cities concerning the range of governance actors, rather than the CTCC element (Section 4.1.1) (Lafferty and Eckerberg, 1998). Nevertheless, the European branch of ICLEI supports a range of conferences and workshops that local authority practitioners can attend concerning sustainable development in the EU, as a mechanism that facilitates CTCC.

As is discussed in Chapter Two, the role of meta-governance cannot be ignored in the political landscape because of the plurality of governing that is purported to take place in this – for example, meta-governance, hierarchy, markets, and networks. This proposition is re-affirmed through an examination of the top-down drivers of networks. Apart from the Council of Europe's Charter of Local Self-Government, which promotes CTCC, the European Commission more generally has an integral role in facilitating local authority networks. Leitner and Sheppard argue that most transnational European networks exist because of 'discourses and practices of the European Commission and individual member states' (Leitner and Sheppard, 2002, p. 505). The Commission has promoted the development and spread of networks as a mode of governance that undertakes PL/PT within the EU, in two ways: through non-statutory policy initiatives; and support through European funding programmes. Each is discussed in turn. First, the Commission has driven CTCC to encourage policy learning between local authorities and for these to implement sustainable development objectives at the local level, through a range of policy initiatives that have been influenced by the 1992 Earth Summit and Agenda 21 (Begin, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006; European Commission, 1997). The Fifth Environmental Action Programme – 'Towards sustainability: a European Community programme of policy and action in relation to the environment and sustainable development' (European Commission, 1997) – facilitates CTCC because

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[32] http://www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=616 'Local Agenda 21 Process Methodology' [accessed 16th April, 2008].

article 10 gives specific focus to urban areas and the role of LA 21 in the EU. Similarly, the Framework for Action for Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union (1998) facilitates CTCC. In developing the setting for a specific urban environmental agenda within the wider framework of EU environmental policy, the intention of some of its programmes is to link up with LA 21 (Evans and Theobald, 2003). One of the main purported facilitators of CTCC within the EU is the 'Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment' (CEC, 2006). It suggests the European Commission will support LA 21 and promote the use of best practice between local authorities. The strategy draws attention to the role of the European Commission in facilitating CTCC because the Commission will:

> Offer support for the exchange of good practice and for demonstration projects on urban issues for local and regional authorities (CEC, 2006, p. 6).

The encouragement of local authority networks and partnerships by the European Commission, is reflective of Type II CTCC (Section 2.3). Whilst the European Commission is present in the political landscape, it relies on voluntary approaches to governing as local authorities undertake CTCC through the mobilization of their own financial resources, and shared common interests.

Second, the Commission has driven CTCC by promoting its funding programmes as drivers of PL/PT within local authority networks/partnerships. This suggests that alongside Type II CTCC, governing also takes place through Type I CTCC as local authorities depend on the external funding resources to govern. EU funding programmes provide '. . . funding to several thousand transnational network projects over a limited time horizon' (Leitner et al., 2002, p. 293; see also Benington and Harvey, 1998; Martins and Pearce, 1999; Schultze, 2003). Mills (2005) explains that the principal sources of funding for cities since 2000 by the Commission have been:

- the environmental budgets LIFE III;
- the Community Framework for Cooperation to Support Sustainable Urban Development;
- the Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development;
- and Structural Funds.

Each of the four main programmes above promotes public-private networks (i.e. local authorities, academics, business enterprises) as a means to achieve sustainable development objectives[33]. They take into consideration environmental sustainability because since 1985 the Commission's projects and programmes have had to undergo environmental impact assessments through the Environmental Assessment Directive (Feldman, 1998). However, it is the prominent role of PL/PT through structural funds that the MLG (Hooghe and Marks 2003) literature (Chapter Two) draws attention to in driving local authorities' involvement in European processes of governance. Furthermore, the MLG literature recognizes that structural funds are the main reason for most existing transnational urban and regional networks in the EU – they account for over one third of the EU budget (Mills, 2005), albeit the extent to which this is all spent on networks is not clear. Structural funds support regional development within the EU as they are used to reduce economic and social deprivation in deprived regions and cities. They foster the emergence and spread of public and public/private networks and partnerships to address these issues. Interestingly, most examples in the literature (Leitner and Sheppard, 1999; Leitner et al., 2002) of sub-national actors involvement in structural funds programmes, which also includes CTCC, is drawn from the early 1990s; for example, ECOS-OVERTURE; INTERREG; RECITE; and PACTE. Figure 4.1 provides a summary of the main structural funds programmes that are active at the time of writing and relevant to the UK.

[33] Life Environment funding is for industry and local authorities that showcase demonstration projects in relation to EU best practice. LIFE III funded urban environmental projects between 2000 and 2004, and in particular sought projects that aligned with the principles of LA 21. Community Framework for Cooperation was active between 2001 and 2004. It focussed specifically on the role of local authority networks and the exchanges of good practice to achieve sustainable urban development and implement LA 21 (Mills, 2005). The Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development drives four themes that involve innovative practices with international partners from a number of sectors (e.g. academic, local authorities): city planning and management, cultural heritage, the built environment, and urban transport.

Figure 4.1 Structural Funds Explained

There are four structural funds: The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); The European Social Fund (ESF); The European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF); and The Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG). Local authorities can apply for these Structural Funds subject to whether they are situated in a region that has Objective 1, 2, or 3 status. Objective 1 funding is for the most disadvantaged areas that require the most economic, social and environmental regeneration. Objective 2 funding is for areas that have industrial decline or urban problems, disadvantaged rural areas and fishing areas that have employment loss. Objective 3 funding is for training, education, and employment purposes. Most Structural Funds are orientated towards Objective 1 and 2 funding. In addition to the priority Objective areas around 5% of the Structural Fund budget will fund Community Initiatives – in particular these are relevant to CTCC. Four initiatives are currently active in the UK which has received approximately £916 million for these between 2000 and 2006:

- EQUAL: this funds training and employability schemes to combat discrimination and inequalities in the labour market.

- LEADER +: this funds rural development projects.

- INTERREG III: this provides funding to encourage cross border, trans-national and interregional co-operation; to encourage balanced and sustainable development across the European Community.

- URBAN II - funds schemes in small and medium sized towns suffering from significant economic and social conversion difficulties.

The current European Structural Funds Programming period ends in 2006 (but they can still be used for delivery of projects until the end of 2008). The new programming period will run from 2007-2013 and local authorities will apply for these funds from their Regional Development Agencies (www.onenortheast.gov.uk). However, how exactly this is going to occur is unclear (Interview, 2006: EU funds officer, Northumberland County Council; leader of Plymouth City Council; onenortheast gov.uk).

Sources: Mills (2005); onenortheast.gov.uk[34]; Northumberland County Council and Plymouth City Council case studies

The ways that the European Commission has promoted the development and spread of networks through non-statutory policy initiatives; and support through European funding programmes, is characteristic of the meta-governing principles discussed in Sections 2.1.4 and 2.3. For example, in facilitating networks through its non-statutory policy initiatives, as Sørensen and Torfing (2005), and Vaboo (2005) note, the meta-governor (the European Commission) provides expertise and recommendations. This is reflective of the hands-off role of meta-governance in Type II CCC, as the meta-governor encourages the development of voluntary networks and monitors from a distance. In the case of the funding of the European programmes, the European Commission has a more hands-on meta-governing role, as it controls the structure and the purpose of the network through funding, regulation, laws, political goals and objectives (Sørensen and Torfing, 2005; Vaboo, 2005). To this end, the framework concerning the three types of CTCC that has been developed within the context of this thesis (Section 2.3) is useful for analysis of meta-governance because it differentiates between the different roles and responsibilities of the meta-governor. The framework recognizes that meta-governance involves both a hands-on (Type I CTCC) and hands-

[34] http://www.onenortheast.co.uk/europeansupport.cfm 'European Support' [accessed 16th June 2008].

off (Type II CTCC) approach, subject to the intentions of the meta-governor in its facilitation of networks. This distinction is not always clear in the meta-governance literature (e.g. Kelly, 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005; Vaboo, 2005). Furthermore, the CTCC typology draws attention to meta-governance as an actor or institution rather than the structure of the network (Section 2.3.1).

The meta-governing role of the Commission and its European funding programmes has implications for understanding CTCC in three ways. First, is that the European Commission facilitates network processes that involve public and private interaction. Thus, it is not always possible to separate out local authority networks and partnerships from the private and public actors mix. This matters because whilst the governance literature (Bulkeley, et al., 2003; Rashman and Hartley, 2002) highlights the importance of local authority networks and partnerships, by its nature CTCC can involve private actors (Chapter Six). As already established in Chapter Two:

> The European Commission has been promoting networks as a new mode of governance at scales ranging from the local to the transnational: between firms, between public and private sectors, and between cities and regions (Leitner and Sheppard, 2002, p. 496).

Second, the CTCC drivers are not mandatory because there is no statutory legislation in place that can force local authorities to undertake participation in networks/partnerships – rather they undertake this on a voluntary basis. This reasserts the suggested significance of voluntary modes of governing through self-organizational forms of governing which is applicable to both Types I and II CTCC, although the Commission uses its funding programmes to drive local authority networks and partnerships (Type I CTCC). Nevertheless, Baker (2000) and Schout and Jordan (2005) explain how the European Commission hopes that voluntary and consensual approaches to governing through partnerships co-operation (Type II CTCC) will help to evolve environmental policy so that sustainable development is less influenced by regulation: 'these principles are seen as a key to the successful promotion of sustainable development in the EU' (Baker, 2000, p. 314). The problem is that from the Commission perspective reliance on PL/PT through voluntary approaches 'seem[s] to carry a much weaker "transfer potential" than more hierarchical forms of governance' (Bugdahn, 2007, p. 127 see also Bomberg and Peterson, 1998). Third, whilst the drivers outlined at the beginning of this

section have suggested that cities have the autonomy to address local objectives, the increasing attention given to EU funded programmes as drivers makes this questionable. This is because the EU funded programmes concern conditional funding which may be more in line with European Commission objectives than local ones.

4.1.3 The Emergence of CTCC in Domestic Governance

The main argument outlined in this section is that unlike at the international and European scales of governance discussed, drivers of CTCC in the domestic arena are generally top-down, and central governments through its meta-governing role have promoted mandatory drivers of CTCC, rather than a reliance on voluntary approaches. In other words, unlike at the international and European scales of governance where the drivers suggest there has been an emergence of Type II CTCC, Type I CTCC is in principle the main form of CTCC that is prevalent in the UK political landscape. This in part reflects how central government has moved away from promoting LA 21 as a driver of CTCC in 2000 towards promoting drivers of CTCC that will help it to achieve targets in its Sustainable Communities and modernisation agendas. An example of this is mandatory drivers of CTCC such as Best Value that facilitate benchmarking activities between local authorities.

The purported influence of the United Nations policy initiatives (i.e. Our Common Future Report; Agenda 21) on central government policy-making can be seen at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the Environment in June 1997. At this summit (Former) Prime Minister Blair stated that he wanted to follow the call from the 1992 Rio summit that 'all local authorities in the UK [are] to adopt local Agenda 21 strategies by the year 2000' (Bennett, 1999, p. 73). This call was reaffirmed in the 1999 national sustainable development strategy (SDS): 'A Better Quality of Life – A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK' (DETR, 1999). The strategy emphasised that LA 21 is important to achieving local sustainable development. However, LA 21 is non-statutory (Patterson and Theobald, 1995); and as Evans et al., (2005) and O'Riordan (2004) argue, one of the main problems with LA 21 is that it has never been part of mainstream policy-making or planning (compare Begin, 2004; Elander and Lidskog, 2000). Furthermore, the extent to which local authorities should

draw on the CTCC element of LA 21 is not promoted in the national SDS. Nevertheless, given that Chapter 28 of LA 21 (UNCED, 1992) suggested that CTCC is an important process in the development of LA 21 strategies, it has been mentioned here. In further support of the argument that central government has not had a genuine commitment to facilitating LA 21 processes within the UK, there has been a shift towards sustainable communities since 2000.

The notion of sustainable communities has meant a turning point away from LA 21 as a policy initiative in its own right. This can be seen in the publication of central government's latest SDS, published in 2005: Securing the Future – the UK Government's Sustainable Development Strategy (HMSO, 2005). This strategy suggests that central government's attention is drawn more towards promoting its Sustainable Communities Plan/agenda. This has long terms strategic planning at its core – for example, sustainable development is brought into mainstream policy-making through the use of Planning Policy Statement One (ODPM, 2005), which central governments SDS (HMSO, 2005) draws attention to. Like LA 21, the Sustainable Communities agenda has encouraged partnership working within cities to achieve sustainable development – for example, between local public, private and voluntary sectors with regards to urban renewal, urban regeneration, and community involvement[35]. The 2005 National SDS suggests that Sustainable Communities can be achieved through a Community Action 2020 programme which builds on the efforts of LA 21. It suggests that the consultative processes of LA 21 should be used to engage with local governance actors within cities. The part of LA 21 that promotes CTCC is not referred to (note the similarities with discussions in Section 4.1.1):

> As part of Community Action 2020 – Together We Can, the Government will celebrate successful Sustainable Community Strategies, parish plans and neighbourhood plans, looking particularly for those that do most to build on Local Agenda 21, are innovative in their approach and help achieve a step change in sustainable development (HMSO, 2005, p. 121).

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[35] To address the Sustainable Communities agenda, central government has a separate Sustainable Communities Plan (ODPM, 2003). The Sustainable Communities Plan was drawn up by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) – now Communities and Local Government (CLG) – as a means to deal with the recognized critical problems of housing provision (ODPM, 2003, 2004a). The essential facts underpinning Sustainable Communities include addressing demands of low-cost affordable housing, dealing with the pressures of demand in the south east and London, and increasing owner occupation (ODPM, 2004a).

Central government has since directed less attention to 'Community Action 2020' as a means to address the Sustainable Communities agenda, as it purports that the main way to achieve this is through building LA 21 processes into (Sustainable) Community Strategies. Within a national policy-making context the SCS is the overarching framework for partnerships at the local level (Chapter Three). They are produced by local authorities and local governance actors within cities, and should reflect and deliver on national priorities set out in the Sustainable Communities Plan, National SDS, and local priorities and concerns. The shift away from LA 21 as a policy in its own right by central government contrasts to the United Nations and EU level that promote its importance as a driver of CTCC. The 2005 National SDS highlights that a review by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that the 400 LA 21 programmes that had established themselves across the UK did have 'a significant collective impact on targets for sustainable development' (HMSO, 2005, p. 29).

However, the biggest indication as to why there has been a move towards a Sustainable Communities agenda is because of criticisms of LA 21 from local communities and local governments who central government has consulted with, that it had two failings. First, that it was not revitalizing local communities. LA 21, for example, had 'struggled to recruit deprived and excluded communities, black and minority ethnic groups and younger and older sections of the population' (HMSO, 2005, p. 21) in neighbourhood renewal and community planning. Second, in the consultation feedback, local authorities suggested there was frustration that 'LA 21 was either "lost" or "diluted" by new processes' (HMSO, 2005, p. 119). The empirical survey for this thesis would seem to lend support to this concern, not least in that respondents struggled to answer the questions on LA 21 concerning its contribution to sustainable development processes and outcomes[36]. This is because respondents suggested that their local authorities no longer have a LA 21 strategy or the strategies have been superseded by, or drawn into, the principles of Sustainable Community Strategies (DETR, 2000; Young, 2000)[37].

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[36] The survey findings suggest that whilst 72 percent of respondents have said their local authority has an LA 21 strategy, 60 percent of the respondents feel that this does not contribute to sustainable development processes (whereas 36 percent are of the opinion it does). 44 percent of respondents consider that it does affect sustainable development outcomes, which is the same number for those who do not. The remaining respondents are unsure.

[37] There are a number of other criticisms of LA 21 in the literature. Houghton and Counsell (2004) and Benson and Jordon (2004) note that the focus on economic principles in the national SDS produced in 1999 undermines the environmental emphasis that is supposed to be promoted by LA 21(compare Bond

The move away from LA 21 as a driver for CTCC does not mean that central government does not give recognition to the importance of PL/PT between local authorities. The modernisation agenda that was brought in by the Labour Government in 1997, and that has been running simultaneously with its sustainable development initiatives, has facilitated local government and governance reforms. The 1999 and 2000 Local Governments Acts in England and Wales, and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 have had an important role in driving forward the modernisation agenda (DETR, 1998a; Jonas et al., 2004; Raco et al., 2006). The reforms have included the promotion of statutory forms of 'partnership governance' (Jessop, 2002, p. 240) (e.g. public-private partnerships) and/or governance networks within cities through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) (Cowell 2004; Davies, 2002; MacLeod et al., 2003; Raco et al., 2006; Walker et al., 2007; Whitehead, 2003b), and between cities through benchmarking exercises between local authorities (Tewdwr-Jones, 2006). Chapter Two has highlighted how central government has a meta-governing role in fostering the emergence and diffusion of self-organizational governance networks/partnerships as an alternative mode of governing to hierarchy to achieve governance outcomes:

> Networks are at the centre of the Labour government's modernisation agenda for public services in general ... and for local government in particular (Walker et al., 2007, p 740).

The purpose of the modernisation agenda is to 'make local policy-making more efficient, equitable, and effective (see Blair, 1996)' (Raco et al., 2006, p. 475) than that achieved through traditional forms of hierarchical governance (Agre, 2000; Kooiman, 2003; Stoker, 1998). These scholars suggest that networks are important to governance because by their natural characteristics (e.g. horizontal structure and participatory arrangements) they have the potential to allow for the modernisation agenda reforms of local government to take place. Furthermore, the reforms represent the rationale of what networks are about (Chapter Two) as they include: an emphasis on joined-up government between the services that are delivered by a local authority; a co-ordinating

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et al., 1998). Furthermore, Selman (1998) explains that most local authorities in the UK have been reluctant to take a lead in the development of LA 21 strategies in the UK because this may discourage participation by other local governance actors. Moreover, Patterson and Theobald (1995) note that resources were not mobilized from central government for local authorities to realize the full potential of LA21.

role for local government in the delivery of public services undertaken by itself and/or the private sector; the participation of other local governance actors in policy-making and policy delivery; better regulation of local services through accountability and transparency mechanisms and improvement in local public services (Tewdwr-Jones et al., 2006). It is the latter reform that has particular relevance to undertaking CTCC on a mandatory basis through PL/PT. To improve performance in service delivery, local authorities have to address a range of statutory targets and performance indicators through Best Value performance management arrangements and a broader Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Framework (Bovaird and Löffler, 2002; Bowerman et al., 2001; DETR, 1998a; 1998b; Hartley and Downe, 2007). CPA is 'a framework for continuous improvement in the quality of local government services' (DTLR, 2001, p. 23). Best Value means that local authorities are required to assess their own performance and have to:

> Make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which they exercise functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (DETR, 1999, p. 3)[38].

The rationale of Best Value and CPA is to strengthen external accountability – for example, local authorities have to show progression indicators which are monitored by the Audit Commission which has responsibility for overseeing CPA (Bowerman et al., 2002; DETR, 1998b; Rashman and Radnor, 2005)[39]. Importantly for understanding the drivers and facilitating mechanisms of CTCC, one of the main ways that central government suggests that local authorities can undertake continuous improvement of local public services is through benchmarking exercises between one another (Tewdwr-

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[38] Best Value in England and Wales 'became statutory on 1 April 2000' (Rashman and Radnor, 2005). The Scotland Local Government Act 2003 goes further than Central Government guidance (for England and Wales) in addressing sustainable development through its Best Value regime, as it states that continuous improvement under Best Value needs to demonstrate that Scottish local authorities are achieving this.

[39] The CPA was introduced in 2002 and involves a combination of assessments that result in the Audit Commission awarding a council an overall judgement of excellent, good, fair, weak or poor: an authority's performance is judged against a framework of elements across a range of services (e.g. housing, environmental services, and transport). The Audit Commission is 'an independent public body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently, and effectively'. The Audit Commission uses the rating to intervene in the management of local authorities' policy–making and delivery and/or enhance greater public accountability. http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/aboutus/ 'About Us' [accessed 5th March, 2008].

Jones, 2006). Benchmarking involves local authorities using performance indicators to compare with similar authorities so that they can gauge how well they are performing in the delivery of a public service(s). Furthermore, benchmarking can be a key conduit of PL/PT as local authorities draw on the experiences and knowledge of another authority to improve on their performance if they do not compare well against an authority with a good standard (Bowerman et al., 2001).

Whilst the drivers of CTCC at the international and EU scales of governance have come from a voluntary basis and have drawn attention to the role of Type II CTCC, some of the national drivers concern the facilitation of mandatory forms and processes of CTCC, which draw specific attention to Type I. The implications of the modernisation agenda for voluntary and mandatory forms and processes of CTCC in relation to PL/PT are explored in greater detail in Chapter Five. Interestingly, the policy networks (Rhodes, 1996, 1997) and governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a) that discuss conceptions of self-organizational networks have less to say about bottom-up drivers of networks/partnerships by the local authorities themselves, although the thesis's substantive findings in Sections 4.2 and 4.3 inform these debates. Within a national policy-making context the SCS is the overarching framework for partnerships at the local level, and bridges the modernisation agenda reforms with sustainable development emphasis of the Sustainable Communities agenda (Chapter Three). This section has established that the formal top-down and bottom-up drivers and mechanisms involved in facilitating CTCC suggest that it is an important documented phenomenon. The next section draws on the empirical survey findings and case study material of the thesis to explore the extent to which CTCC is being undertaken at the various scales of governance.

4.2 Experiences of CTCC in the Political Landscape

This section explores the extent to which the drivers of CTCC are enabling practitioners to get involved in this. The main argument of this section is that the experiences of practitioners suggests that the formal drivers are not as significant as they have been in past studies, for example, LA 21 and European structural funds programmes. The two subsequent chapters discuss the reasons as to why. Rather, the pattern that emerges is

that local authorities are members of formal networks that are not necessarily associated with formal drivers. This implies that the recognized top-down formal drivers are not the only ones shaping CTCC in the political landscape. To understand how the arguments of this section are made, there are three main sections that are structured as follows. First, conceptual understanding of CTCC engagement is defined. Second, practitioners' experiences of CTCC on the ground are examined. Third, the key policy areas within which CTCC is taking place are highlighted.

4.2.1 Analysis of and Defining Engagement

Local authority engagement in CTCC can be defined from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective. The qualitative approach is to examine the depth of engagement by a local authority in its interaction with other authorities, which is understood as either active or passive in nature. Active engagement concerns the increasing strength of sub-national governance in European policy (Goldsmith, 2003; John, 2001; Leitner et al., 2002; Pearce, 2000; Radaelli, 2003). This has parallel links with the three main CTCC Types discussed in Section 2.3. For example, the extent to which local authorities have limited autonomy by drawing on structural funds to in be involved in European practices (Type I CTCC); or have more proactive autonomy to undertake PL/PT on a voluntary basis (Type II CTCC); or influence policy-making and policy outcomes (Type III CTCC). As such, it is argued in this section that to understand active engagement in networks and partnerships in the International, European, and UK domestic arenas, a similar line of logic can be applied. Passive engagement is where a local authority is a member of a named network and may draw on information disseminated by it, but is not actively engaged in the network/partnership. However, it can be problematic to define or differentiate between active and passive engagement, as active engagement in one network for one scholar or empirical survey respondent may have a different meaning for another. This is considered when making assumptions about the overview of CTCC from the substantive findings.

The quantitative approach is to examine the numbers of networks and partnerships that a local authority is involved in, as a means to examining the extent of engagement by a

local authority (Martins and Pearce, 1999; Pearce, 2000). However, it is unclear as to what the relevance of being involved in a number of networks means for engagement. There is a general absence of empirical material in the broader governance literature concerning quantitative approaches to transnational CTCC – as the following sections illustrate, most approaches concern a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The most recent and comprehensive survey of UK-based local authority engagement in the EU was undertaken by Martin and Pearce (1999) in 1995/1996. Their survey examined Sub-National Authorities (SNA) engagement in the EU from 267 (55%) of all local authorities in England, Scotland, and Wales. They draw on quantitative and qualitative methods to examine the extent to which local authorities are drawing on structural funds such as INTERREG to operate through transnational networks and regional partnerships. Prior to Martins and Pearce's comprehensive study, earlier substantive studies noted in the literature are a survey by Goldsmith and Sperling in 1992 (Goldsmith and Sperling, 1997) and the Audit Commission (1991) (see Fleurke and Willemse, 2006; John 2000; Martin and Pearce, 1999). However, the European and MLG literature (Chapter Two) generally lacks empirical research on the assessment of the European impact on SNAs (Fleurke and Willemse, 2006; Pearce, 2000) and the impact of SNAs on European policy-making and their overall European influence (Benington and Harvey, 1998; Jeffery, 2000; John, 1997). The survey by Martins and Pearce identified that a third of the local authorities they surveyed stated active involvement in more than five European funded initiatives. They do not however clarify what active engagement means. More recent analysis suggests that it is only the larger cities like Birmingham that are involved in the European process and are actively engaged in formal European networks associated with lobbying governing practices (John, 2000; Kern and Bulkeley 2008; Marshall, 2005; Schultz, 2003) (Section 2.3). Kern and Bulkeley (2008,) explain that Trans Municipal Networks (TMNs) 'seem to be primarily networks of pioneers for pioneers' (Kern and Bulkeley, 2008, p. 2). This is because these have the resource capacities and autonomy to be involved in these – Birmingham City Council is an example well documented in the literature.

The broader governance literature (Cowell, 2004; Jessop, 2002; Raco et al., 2006) concerning self-organizational approaches to governing has less to say about CTCC engagement within the UK, and in relation to sustainable development practices,

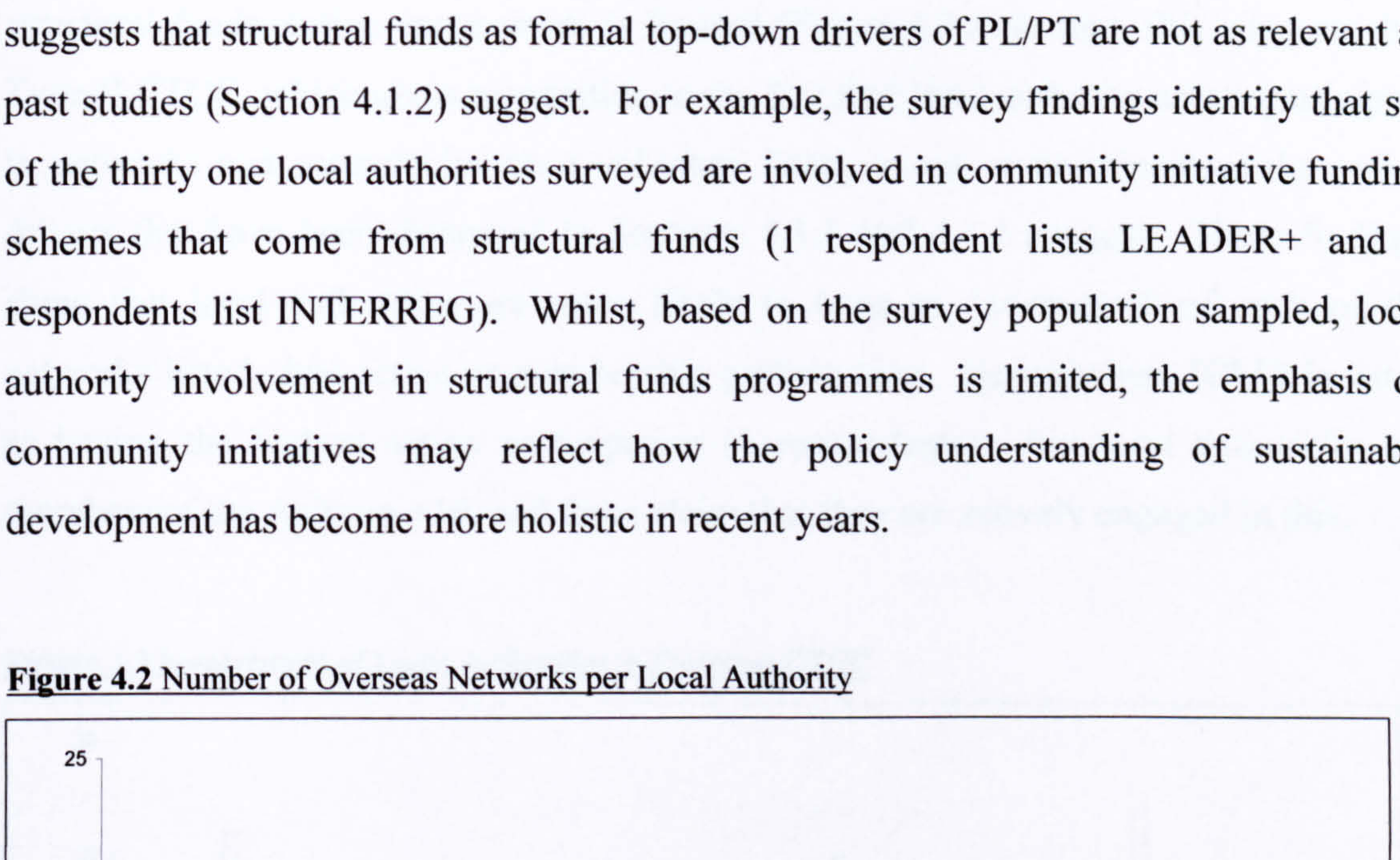
although it acknowledges the role of public-private actor networks (Section 4.1.3). Thus, it is more problematic to compare the thesis empirical findings to past empirical analysis. Wolman and Page (2002) (see Bulkeley, 2006) have undertaken research on best practice in urban regeneration by sending a survey to 200 directors of UK-based regeneration partnerships. They found that most learning of best practice takes place between neighbouring authorities (City/County/Districts) and interaction was quite informal. Of the 31 respondents that completed the questionnaires of the empirical survey (Chapter Three) underlying the substantive findings of this thesis, 7 drew attention to the role of neighbouring local authorities in the qualitative part of the survey, and they highlighted that the informality aspect is an important element of the co-operation process. However, these respondents drew attention to co-operating with neighbouring local authorities to undertake project-working in partnerships, in the delivery of projects on the ground, rather than the use of best practice. Examples of co-operation between neighbouring authorities include the development of a county-wide climate change strategy that takes into consideration the impacts of climate change on the County and Districts (2 respondents), and local authorities working together to develop county-wide waste management strategies (3 respondents). Furthermore, 2 respondents from Scotland explained that local authorities are required to work together on a structure plan that involves sustainability concepts for their administrative region in Scotland. This is a mandatory type of co-operation set by Scottish Ministers. The project-based co-operation between neighbouring authorities draws attention to the fact that this is an important governing process alongside PL/PT, and the purported lobbying roles. However, as the next section illustrates, the use of good/best practice between local authorities in a broader geographical sense (i.e. beyond neighbouring authorities) is an important governing process of local authorities in both formal and informal practices.

4.2.2 Examining the Political Landscape

Respondents of the thesis empirical survey showed that in general they considered their local authorities' involvement overseas to be based on membership in name only – passive engagement, rather than more active means (Figure 4.2). 7 respondents explain they are members of one network, 2 respondents are members of two networks, and 3

are members of three networks. In terms of active engagement, 6 respondents described themselves as being actively engaged in one network/partnership with only one local authority being actively engaged in two. Furthermore, 4 respondents have suggested that they have no involvement in overseas engagement. This is considerably lower than the substantive findings suggested by the research of Martins and Pearce (1999), in which a third of local authorities surveyed were involved in more than five European funded initiatives. Thus, the thesis survey findings draw into question assumptions that the Commission is driving and supporting a vast number of actively engaged networks and partnerships through its meta-governing role as outlined in Type I CTCC (Section 2.3). To further support this argument, the qualitative part of the empirical survey suggests that structural funds as formal top-down drivers of PL/PT are not as relevant as past studies (Section 4.1.2) suggest. For example, the survey findings identify that six of the thirty one local authorities surveyed are involved in community initiative funding schemes that come from structural funds (1 respondent lists LEADER+ and 5 respondents list INTERREG). Whilst, based on the survey population sampled, local authority involvement in structural funds programmes is limited, the emphasis on community initiatives may reflect how the policy understanding of sustainable development has become more holistic in recent years.

Figure 4.2 Number of Overseas Networks per Local Authority



Interestingly, as discussed in Section 4.2.1 the UK's central government has also promoted the importance of community planning but this has emphasised participatory engagement within LSPs rather than the learning and sharing of knowledge between cities. There were 7 respondents that suggested their local authorities 'had' obtained funding through EU structural funds, which reflects the fluidity of networks and partnerships. Structural funds are only available to local authorities situated within certain geographical areas of deprivation. Hence, the extent to which the survey sample population has captured local authorities within or outside of Objective 1, 2, and 3 areas (Table 4.1), and influenced the findings, is moot. The survey findings highlight that where CTCC is taking place within formal networks that are not directly related to structural funds, active engagement is limited (Figure 4.3). In turn, this suggests that Type II CTCC, which gives recognition to the fact that local authority actors participate in networks and partnerships on a voluntary basis, is not as prominent as the policy drivers that have been discussed in Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 suggest. These findings show that local authorities are more likely to have an 'awareness' of each of the networks listed, than active or membership participation. Nevertheless, ICLEI is listed as having the highest active participation (6 respondents). Six local authorities are members of the Aalborg +10, and three claim that they are actively engaged in this.

Figure 4.3 Involvement of Local Authorities in Overseas CTCC

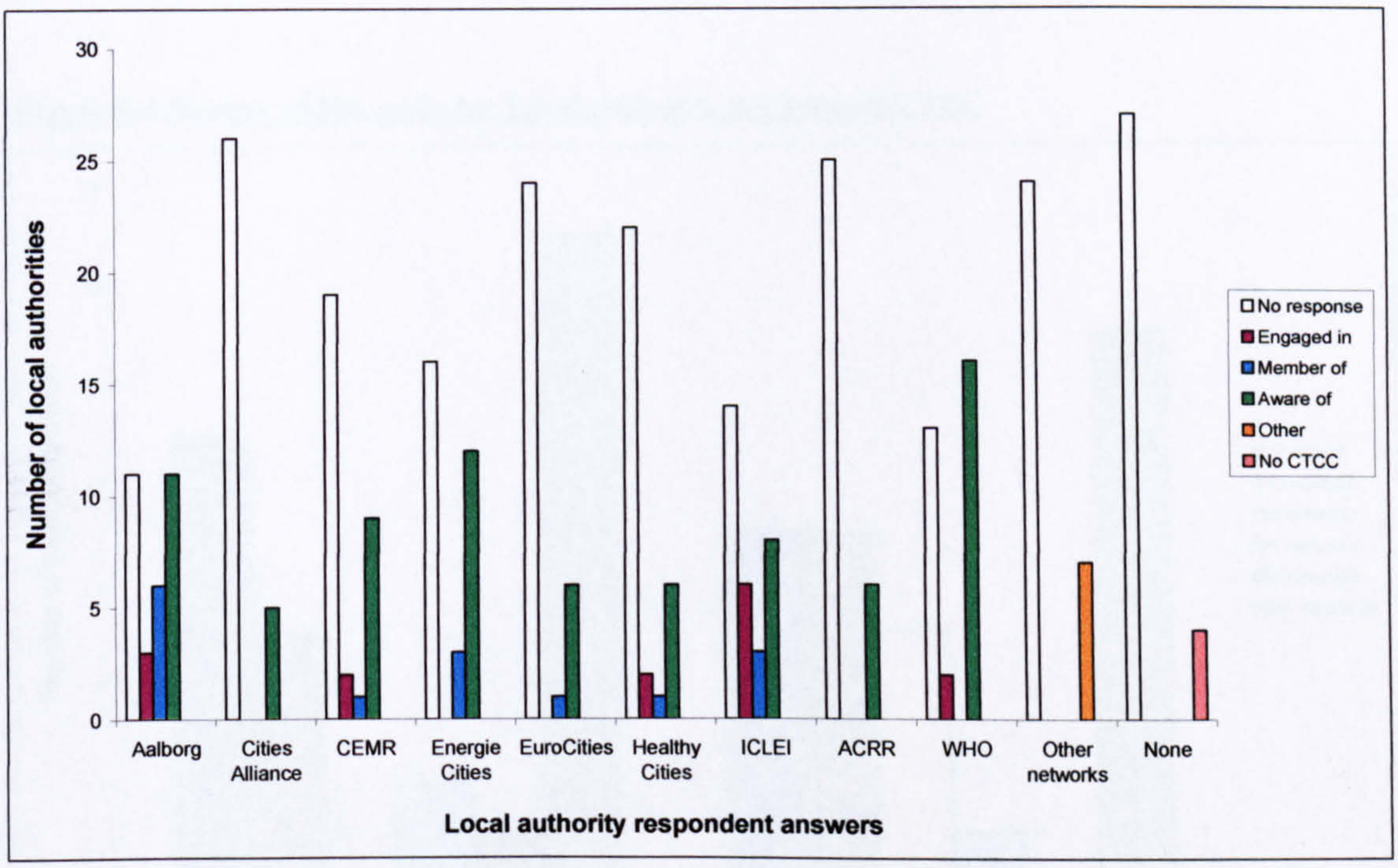
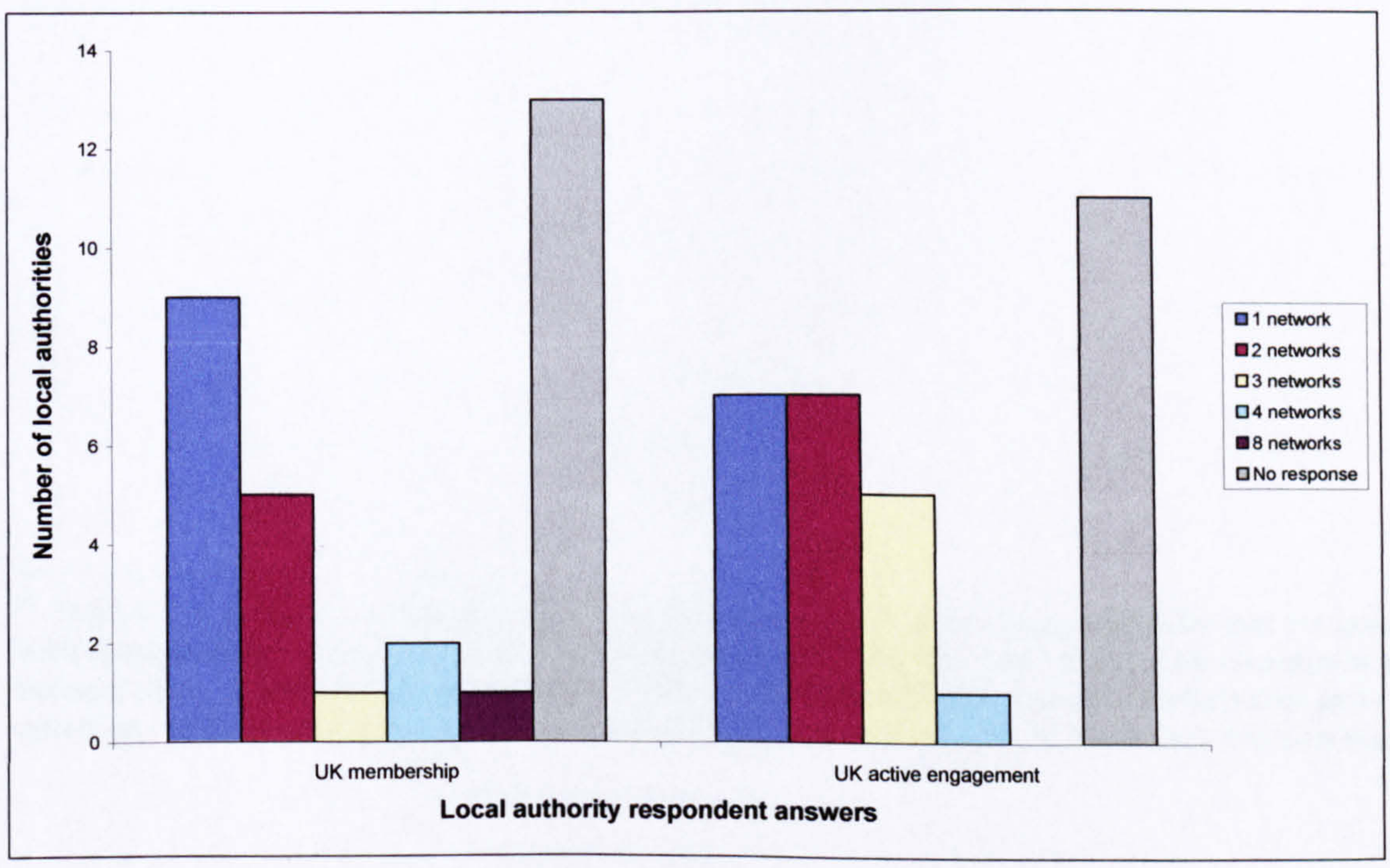


Figure 4.3 shows that for the other listed formal networks, each have approximately three local authorities identified as members, and one or two local authorities are more actively engaged in these. Involvement in the formal networks listed in Figure 4.3 relates to bottom-up drivers of CTCC; for example, the motivation of the actors and the resources available to them to be involved in these. Barriers to membership and more active participation in networks are explored further in Chapters Five and Six. For CTCC within the UK, the survey findings suggest that the highest number of networks/partnerships that a respective local authority is a member of is eight (Figure 4.4) while the second highest is four (2 respondents). One local authority is a member of three networks/partnerships, whereas five local authorities are a member of two, and nine are members of one network/partnership activity. For active engagement, one local authority is involved in four networks/partnerships, and five local authorities described themselves as being actively engaged in three. Seven local authorities suggested active engagement in two networks, and seven also suggested they were active in one form of co-operation. In summary, the survey findings suggest that local authorities are more likely to be involved in two or three more domestic networks than that of European or International interaction – this is for both membership and active forms of engagement. In further support of the argument that engagement is more likely to be taking place within the domestic arena than with overseas counterparts the survey explored local authority's participation in named formal networks (Figure 4.5).

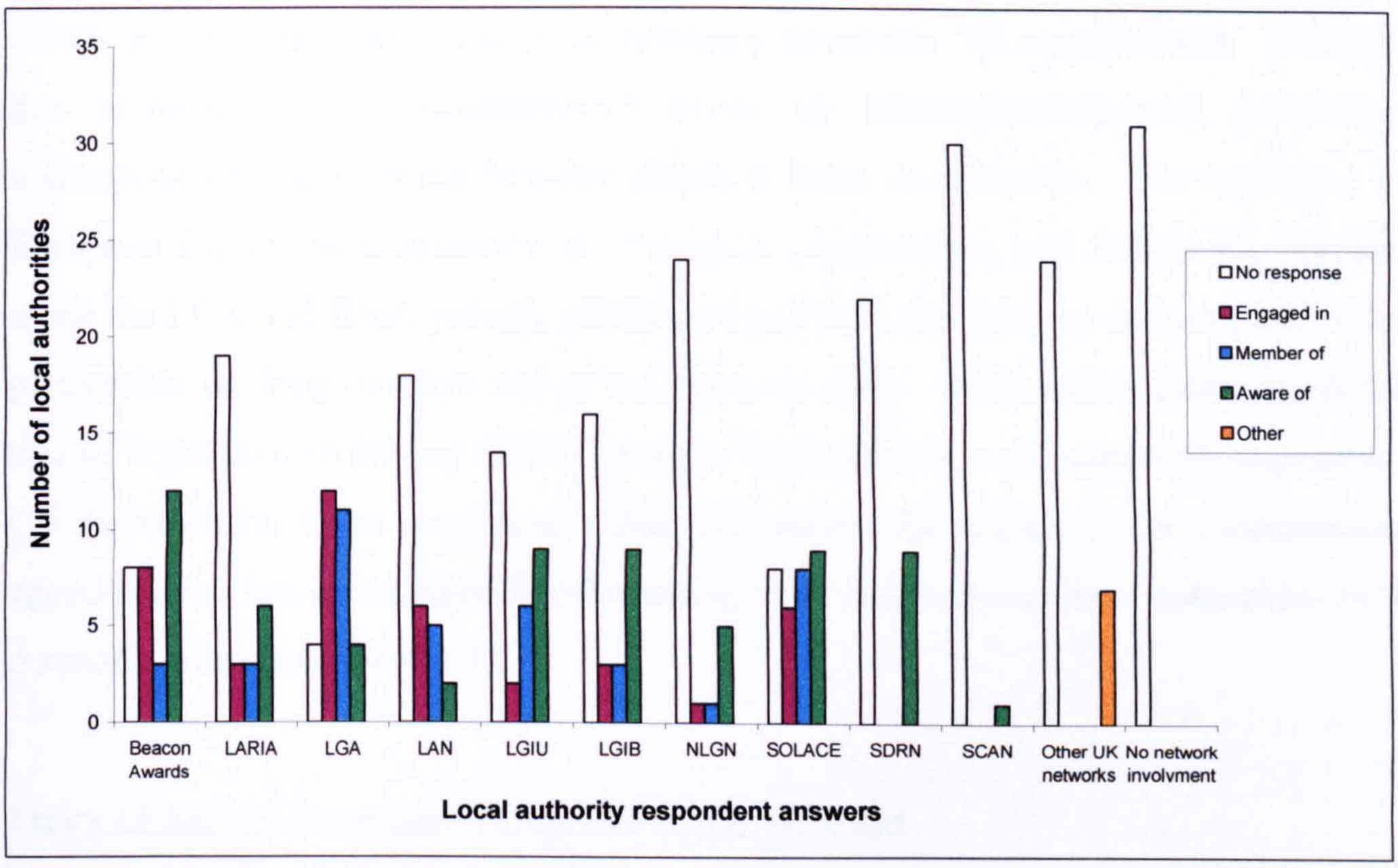
Figure 4.4 Number of Networks per Local Authority in Domestic CTCC



The Local Government Association (LGA) is listed as having the highest number of members (12 respondents) and active engagements (11 respondents) (Figure 4.5)[40]. Interestingly, the suggested importance of the LGA network in the survey findings is contrary to findings in the case studies. The LGA in the climate change adaptation and community planning case studies was not an important point for discussion by the actors interviewed. This in part may be because the LGA does not necessarily involve CTCC as it acts as an umbrella platform from which it disseminates information down to local authorities. Seven respondents stated they are members of SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers), and eight suggested they are active participants of this network. For the other listed formal networks, each have about three to five local authorities identified as members, with three to five local authorities that are also more actively engaged in these. There is no involvement in the Sustainable Development Research Network (SDRN) or UK Sustainable Cities and Aviation Network (UK SCAN). 'Other' (Figure 4.5) named specific forms of local authority co-operation listed by respective respondents are: Sustainability Practitioners Network; ENCAMS Cleaner; Green Alliance; London Energy Partnership; Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN); Convention of Scottish local authorities (COSLA); and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). IDeA has an important role in promoting best practice between local authorities (Chapter Five). It promotes the Beacon Awards Status Scheme that was set up by central government to disseminate best practice in service delivery across local government.

[40] The LGA is a voluntary lobbying organisation for English and Welsh local authorities that are tasked with disseminating national policy information back to local authorities, and voicing their concerns at the national level. It also undertakes a number of other roles related to local authority performance and co-operation. In Scotland the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) undertakes a similar role.

Figure 4.5 Local Authority Involvement within UK Networks



Interestingly, whilst the drivers of UK-based CTCC discussed in Section 4.1.3 reflected CTCC Type I given their mandatory nature, this section has shown how local authorities are involved in a range of networks that are not mandatory. This shows that there are other drivers of UK CTCC other than top-down formal mandatory ones, for example, the Best Value legislation, that has been discussed in Section 4.2. A useful way to understand why CTCC is taking place is by its exploring the basis. The basis concerns the rationale as to how and why CTCC is undertaken, and closely corresponds with how drivers of CTCC are understood in the literature (which has been discussed in Section 4.1). For example, whether CTCC is undertaken in a voluntary manner for recognized benefits, or whether it is down to mandatory forms of engagement such as imposed legislation. The results from the empirical survey (Figure 4.6) show that when combining the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' variables most of the respondents (26) consider that the main basis for co-operation is voluntary because of the potential benefits that can be incurred: for example, greater cost efficiency, more effective policy-making, learning outcomes, and additional income (Chapter Five). This closely ties in with the literature concerning how self-organizational networks are suggested to function (Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Peters, 2000) (Section 2.1.4), and draws attention to the role of Type II CTCC in the political landscape.

In further support of this argument, respondents suggest that the second reason that CTCC is undertaken also relates to voluntary processes (18 respondents). However, this is responding to recommended advice by international/national government institutions on the possible benefits obtained from co-operation. For example, the European Commission promotes its European programmes, and within the domestic arena the LGA and IDeA provide advice and guidance for drawing on best practice and partnership working overseas and in the domestic arena. Respondents also consider the role of legislation in driving CTCC between local authorities in mandatory engagement (16 respondents) to be important. This may reflect the impact of the modernisation agenda which has encouraged benchmarking exercises between local authorities in the domestic arena (Section 4.1.3).

Figure 4.6 Basis for Co-operation by Respective Local Authorities

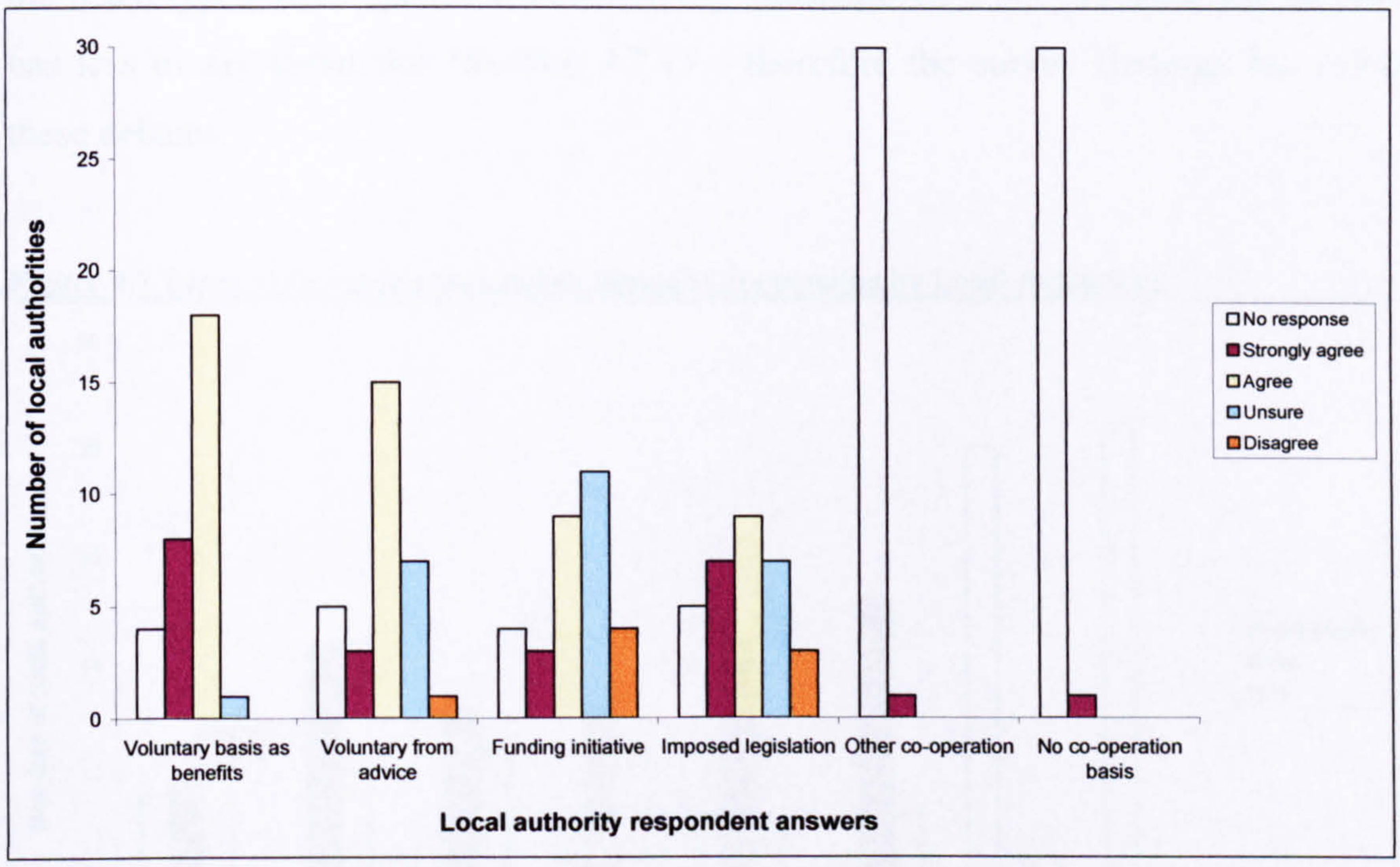
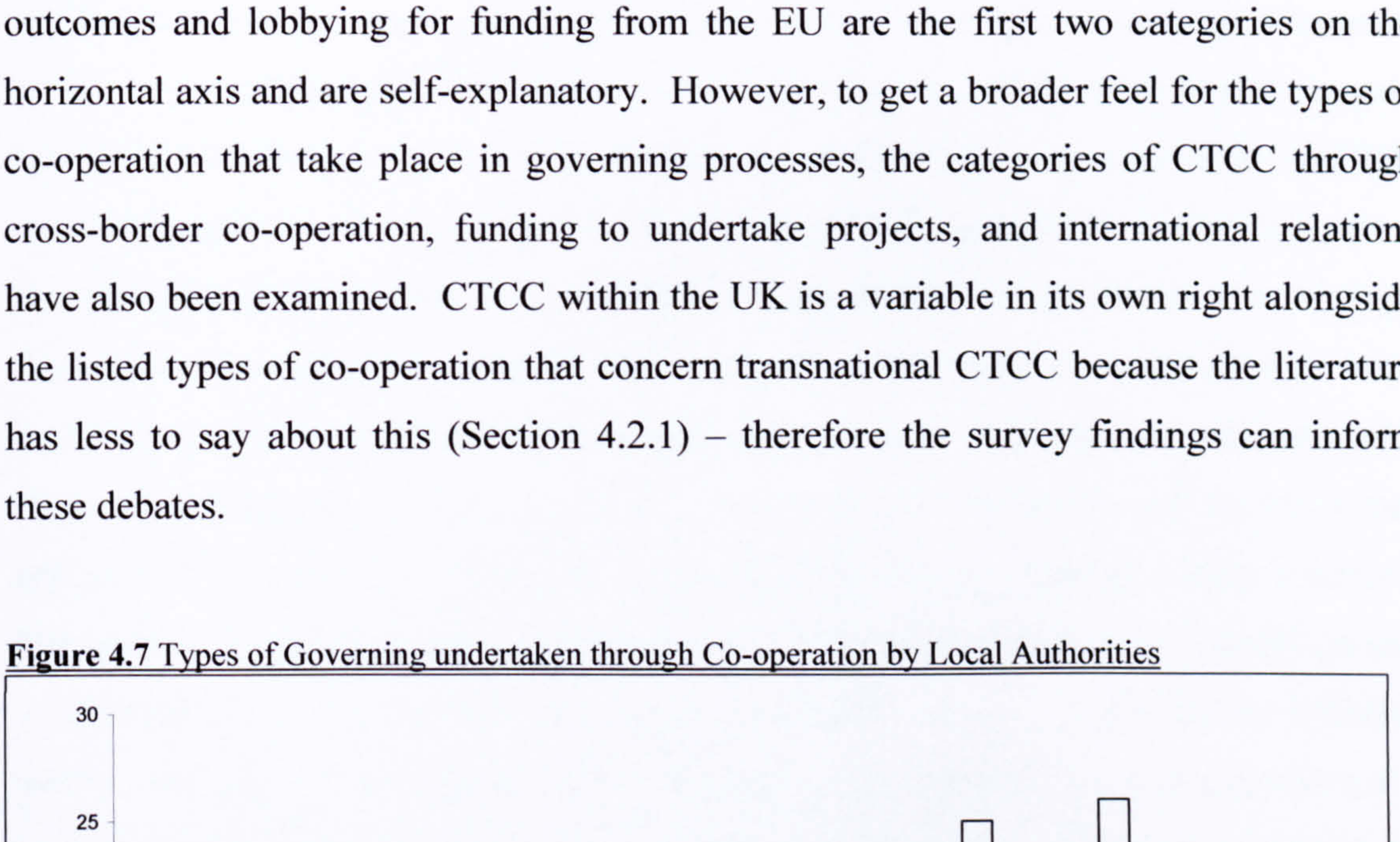


Figure 4.6 also shows that the least likely basis for co-operation is to engage in voluntary interaction through drawing on grants/funding from national/international government institutions (12 respondents). As Chapter Two has argued, supranational and national institutions can govern self-organizational networks through meta-governing principles (basis), while local authorities draw on funds to facilitate co-operation (process). As drawing on funds is not high on the respondents list, this may

tie-in with assumptions about the possible decreasing significance of structural funds as drivers of CTCC (Chapter Six).

The survey also sought to examine the governing processes of CTCC - through its lobbying role, or PL/PT; and whether these are taking place more overseas or in the domestic arena (Figure 4.7). The main governing processes of CTCC have been used as categories in the questionnaire as the survey findings can contribute to an examination as to which of these is the most prominent and the reasons why. Lobbying for policy outcomes and lobbying for funding from the EU are the first two categories on the horizontal axis and are self-explanatory. However, to get a broader feel for the types of co-operation that take place in governing processes, the categories of CTCC through cross-border co-operation, funding to undertake projects, and international relations have also been examined. CTCC within the UK is a variable in its own right alongside the listed types of co-operation that concern transnational CTCC because the literature has less to say about this (Section 4.2.1) – therefore the survey findings can inform these debates.

Figure 4.7 Types of Governing undertaken through Co-operation by Local Authorities



The findings (Figure 4.7) highlight that there is more CTCC being undertaken in the UK (18 respondents), than overseas. However, where CTCC is taking place overseas,

international relations which is categorized as twin cities (16 respondents) in the questionnaire scores highly, as does local authorities' engagement in European activities through drawing on European funds (16 respondents). Local authority respondents referred to international relations with towns/cities in France, Germany, Uganda, Kashmir, and Norway. Other examples of towns and cities that UK local authorities are involved in co-operation with overseas include: Perm (Russia), Strasbourg (Germany), Krefeld (Germany), and Masaya (Nicaragua).

Although Figure 4.7 does not explicitly suggest PL/PT to be a governing process of CTCC, the evidence from the qualitative part of the survey and the case studies suggests that this very strongly ties in with twin cities, structural funds programmes, and UK-based engagement. For example, 4 respondents who completed the qualitative part of the questionnaire claim that their respective local authorities are involved in strategic friendships involving the learning and sharing of best practice projects for: waste management (2 respondents), cycling and cycle paths (1 respondent), and sustainable transport (1 respondent) with twin cities. The importance of PL/PT and the use of best practice in CTCC can be seen in terms of cross-border working which relates to European funds programmes (13 respondents). The role of funding for specific project co-operation (13 respondents) also scores reasonably highly. Lobbying to influence policy-outcomes is less likely to be a governing process of CTCC (10 respondents) – however, the qualitative aspect of the survey has not provided evidence as to where and why this lobbying is taking place. The 'other' category relates to named networks/partnerships that come under structural funds programmes which have been discussed at the beginning of this section. Four respondents stated that their respective local authorities were not involved in any co-operation. The suggestion from the findings above that there is more UK-based CTCC taking place than overseas might appear to contradict arguments set out in Section 4.1.3 that the modernisation agenda encourages partnership working within cities rather than between them. However, it could be that respondent's local authorities may be involved in more trans-national networks/partnerships than they realize. In other words, if a respondent is based within the waste management department of a local authority, they may not be aware of sustainable development networks in another policy area, for example, climate change adaptation, or community planning.

To provide an overview of the extent of CTCC taking place across the four local authority case studies (Northumberland County Council, Peterborough City Council, Plymouth City Council, Aberdeen City Council), Table 4.2 details the networks and partnerships that they are involved in. The empirical survey findings for each of the case studies, and the information obtained from site visits using semi-structured interviews with a wide range of practitioners within these local authorities, has been drawn upon to provide an overview (Chapter Three). The first two categories in the far left vertical column of Table 4.2 refer to any information from the survey findings and the site visits concerning formal networks and partnerships across the case studies for both transnational and domestic engagement respectively. The third category in the left vertical column highlights the types of informal CTCC within the UK domestic arena that has been identified from across the four case studies. This relates specifically to the policy areas of analysis – climate change adaptation for Northumberland County Council and Peterborough City Council; and community planning for Plymouth City Council (Sustainable Community Strategy) and Aberdeen City Council (Community Plan). The next section examines the main policy areas from the survey findings that CTCC is likely to develop to achieve sustainable development objectives.

Table 4.2 Summary of CTCC in the Case Studies

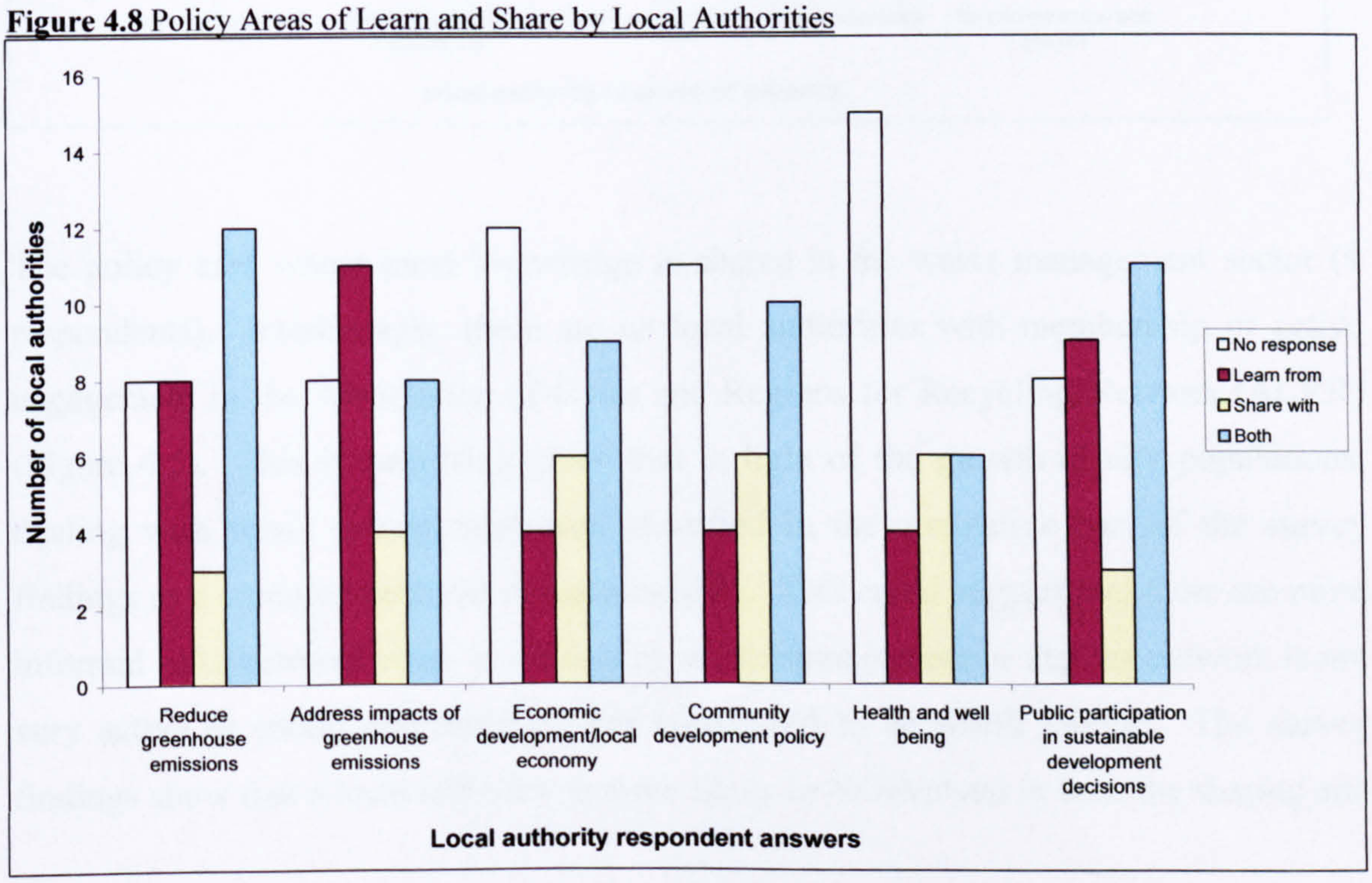
	Northumberland County Council	**Peterborough City Council**	**Plymouth City Council**	**Aberdeen City Council**
Formal Transnational CTCC	Twin cities: Decin, Czech Republic; Kutno Poland; Rheinland, Germany* Networks: - ICLEI*; - Sustainable Energy Europe*	Twin cities: Bourges, France; Viersen Germany; Vinnytsya Ukraine*	Twin cities: Plymouth USA; Brest France; Gdynia Poland; Novorossiysk Russia*	Twin cities: Regensburg, Germany; Clermont-Ferrand, France; Stavanger, Norway* Networks: - Aalborg+10*; - Energie Cities*; - East Scotland European Consortium*; - North Sea Commission*; - ICLEI*
Formal Domestic CTCC	- Beacon Awards Scheme*; - LGA*; - Local Government Information Unit*.	- Beacon Awards Scheme*; - LGA*; - Local Authority Network*; - Solace*	- LGA*; - LGIU*; - SOLACE*; - Sustainability Practitioners Network* - ENCAMS Leaner, SAFER and Greener network*	- Local Authority Research and Intelligence Association*; - Solace*; - Sustainable Scotland Network*; - Convention of Scottish local authorities* - Best Value Housing network - Sustainable Scotland Network;
Informal CTCC in policy areas of analysis (domestic only)	Climate change adaptation: - Department to Department of a similar policy area (i.e. environmental departments in developing Climate Change Action Plans) - Neighbouring local authorities	Climate change adaptation: - Department to Department of a similar policy area (i.e. environmental departments in developing Climate Change Action Plans) - Neighbouring local authorities	Community Planning (SCS): - Department to Department of a similar policy area; - Neighbouring local authorities; - DCLG	Community Planning (Community Plan): - Department to Department of a similar policy area; - Neighbouring local authorities; - Statutory regional actors

* Denotes evidence that has been drawn upon from the empirical survey findings for the four case study local authorities, albeit this information may also have been drawn upon from interviews with practitioners.

4.2.3 Exploring CTCC through Policy Areas of Sustainable Development

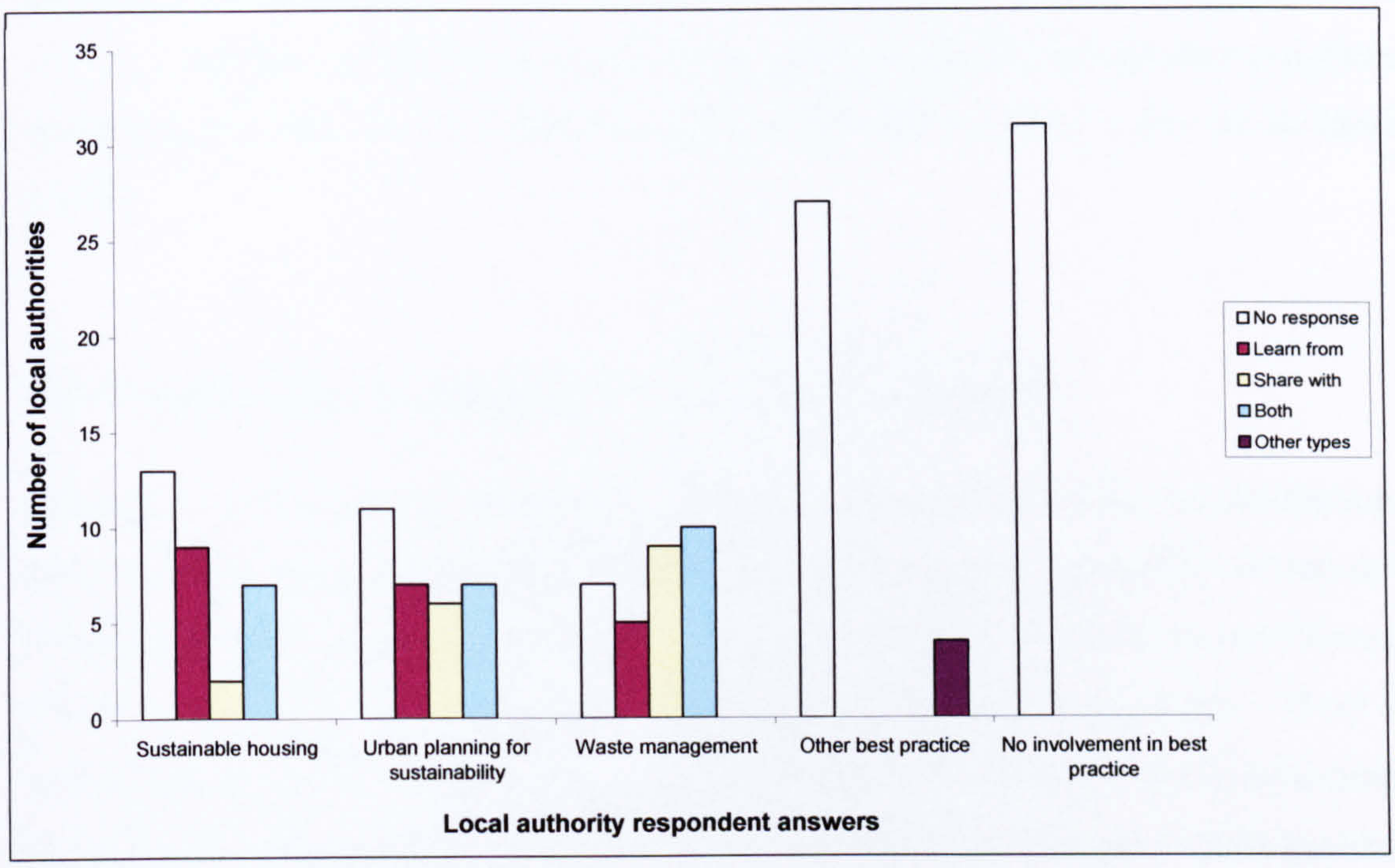
As Section 2.1.3 has shown, less is known in the academic literature about local authority networks/partnerships within the context of environmental governance (Goodwin et al., 2006; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Peters and Pierre, 2004; Schultze, 2003). Analysis has generally focused on a political economic context – for example, structural funds in the EU, and urban development in the UK. This section explores the policy areas where learning and/or sharing of best practice is most likely to take place by local authorities across the three scales of governance (international, EU, UK) that concern addressing sustainable development objectives. It is argued that there is generally more learning than sharing of best practice between local authorities taking place. Furthermore, learning is important in policy areas that have recently been given attention in policy-making by supra-national institutions and central government – climate change adaptation, and greenhouse gas emission reductions, and community planning in local governance. Figures 4.8 and 4.9 show that local authorities are most likely to draw on the knowledge from another authority in the policy area of addressing the impacts of greenhouse emissions (11 respondents) than in other policy areas. This could suggest that as has been highlighted in Chapter Three, adaptation is a relatively new discipline within the UK. This can also explain why activity by authorities in disseminating their best practice is low in this area (4 respondents).

Figure 4.8 Policy Areas of Learn and Share by Local Authorities



Local authorities are also highly involved in the learning of best practice from other local authorities concerning public participation in sustainable development initiatives (9 respondents). This may reflect the fact that central government's modernisation agenda has encouraged local authorities to work through partnerships within cities (e.g. Community Strategies – Section 4.1.3 and Chapter Three), and therefore they look to other local authorities to learn how to undertake these processes. Similarly, central government's emphasis on community involvement is also reflected in the policy area of community development whereby authorities are involved in both the learning and sharing of best practice concerning how to involve the community in policy initiatives.

Figure 4.9 Policy Areas of Learn and Share by Local Authorities



The policy area where most knowledge is shared is the waste management sector (9 respondents). Interestingly, there are no local authorities with membership or active engagement in the Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling Network (ACRR) (Figure 4.5). This is surprising given that in light of the growth of city populations, dealing with waste management was identified in the qualitative part of the survey findings as a common problem of sustainability. This could suggest that there are more informal links between cities in addressing waste management or that the network is not very active or useful and therefore not considered to be worth joining. The survey findings show that a local authority is more likely to be involved in both the sharing and

learning of best practice in the policy area of reducing greenhouse gas emissions than in other policy areas (12 respondents). This could reflect concerns about mitigating climate change at the various tiers of governance in general, or it could be seen as a 'new challenge'. The policy areas with the suggested lowest level of overall involvement by local authorities in CTCC are health and 'well-being' followed by economic development. Compared to the other policy areas in the study, there is a low level of engagement by local authorities in sharing best practice in the policy area of sustainable housing (2 respondents). However, learning from other local authorities is relatively high in this policy area, with 9 respondents suggesting this is the case and 7 respondents suggesting they are involved in both the learning and sharing of best practice in this policy area. Having provided an overview of practitioners' experiences of CTCC, the next section draws on the case study material to explore their experiences concerning the key top-down/bottom-up formal and informal drivers that are facilitating CTCC.

4.3 Creating and Maintaining CTCC on the Ground

This section draws on the case study material to argue that in reality the facilitation of local authority partnerships/networks can involve a complex interaction of top-down formal and bottom-up formal/informal CTCC drivers. The top-down formal drivers of CTCC concern a complex interaction of global and local MLG processes. There is a central hub (e.g. the United Nations) that facilitates the drivers of CTCC as strategies (e.g. LA 21), through funding programmes, or legislation, through a meta-governing role. There are clear scales of governance, as is identified in 'Type I' MLG (Hooghe and Marks, 1996) (Chapter Two). In contrast, the drivers of CTCC that are bottom-up, are more problematic to conceptualize and define because there is no central hub that facilitates these. Rather, links are horizontal as connections between nodes (local authorities) means there is more of a nebulas that is likened to 'Type II' MLG processes (Hooghe and Marks, 2001) (Chapter Two). With these thoughts in mind, this section raises questions about the effectiveness of top-down formal drivers of CTCC, and their importance as they are understood and discussed in the literature (Section 4.1). This section also discusses the effectiveness of the mechanisms of governing discussed in Section 4.1 for maintaining links between local authority institutions. To this end, first,

this section draws on practitioners' experiences of how town twinning and networks emerge. It draws on examples from the Plymouth City Council case study, and Aberdeen City Council, and Northumberland County Council case studies to support these arguments. Second, this section draws on the practitioners' experiences to discuss how the links in these town twinning and network examples are maintained, or disappear.

4.3.1 The Creation of CTCC on the Ground

This section argues that there are four key ways that links between cities emerge for both partnerships and networks: through top-down processes; as a bilateral formal and informal process; through chance encounters between local authority practitioners; and as a combination of top-down, bilateral, and chance encounters between actors. Each is discussed in turn. Plymouth City Council undertook a sustainable development project with its twin city Novorossiysk in Russia, which was facilitated by the EU. The Senior Environmental Policy Officer for Plymouth City Council explains that the European Commission posted a letter to her, asking if an EU representative could meet with her in Plymouth to talk about the possibility of establishing twinning links within another city. The EU representatives had looked at suitable cities on the Aalborg Charter list and then tried to match up similar cities to undertake co-operative programmes concerning achieving sustainable development. They identified Novorossiysk as being similar to Plymouth in terms of its size, economy, and geographical similarities – for example, both cities are ports. These two cities became involved in the EU funded Black Sea Environmental Programme (Type I CTCC) that was dependent on an EU five year funding programme (1992 to 1996)[41]. The project's purpose was for Novorossiysk to learn from Plymouth about community involvement in local democracy as a dimension of sustainable development:

> Russia was in a stage of transition to the market economy and we were at a stage where we were addressing community development (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council).

[41] There were 3 sub-programmes within the Programme: contamination and waste and the physical environment; water and land quality and sustainable communities. Plymouth was involved in the latter.

The Commission provided funds for a couple of local authority Policy Officers from Plymouth to visit Novorossiysk for nine days. In the return visit the Plymouth side demonstrated to the Novorossiysk team how to structure strategies and write delivery plans to make the best use of the resources they have. Whilst this example does demonstrate that drivers of CTCC can be top-down, in the case of Aberdeen City Council and its involvement in a community project with its twin city Clermont-Ferrand in France, the CTCC drivers were based on bottom-up, formal bi-lateral arrangements (Type II CTCC). Relations between Aberdeen City Council and Clermont Ferrand have traditionally been ceremonial, but over the last few years have involved more active engagement through a community development initiative. The initiative emerged out of discussions within Aberdeen City Council's community development department about how it could develop its international strategy. Concurrently, the department decided that community engagement is a policy area that needed to be developed, and this could be addressed through an international strategy with a twin city. In short, the CTCC driver was that the exchange of knowledge concerning community development would be a useful learning process and lead to learning outcomes, for both cities involved. As one of Aberdeen City Council's Community Planning Officers explains:

> We wanted community representatives from both cities to learn from each other about how to be involved in community engagement (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

The Community Planning Officer and the International Officer decided on a basic project outline which was attached to a letter that was sent to Clermont-Ferrand and the idea was welcomed. Aberdeen's community planning department developed a more specific proposal, and funding was agreed by the Council's Finance Committee. In September 2006, Aberdeen took six community representatives to Clermont-Ferrand to meet with its French counterparts. Discussions and demonstrations as to how Clermont-Ferrand municipality involves and works with its community in local democracy took place. The return visit took place in November 2006. The Aberdeen City Council example illustrates how CTCC is dynamic and can fluctuate between periods of activity and inactivity. It shows how links that have been forged between local authority institutions can become more active where resources are available to allow this to happen; and where there is motivation of the practitioners to be involved in CTCC

(Marsh, 1998b). For example, the ceremonial links between both cities have developed to have strategic ties through PL/PT for local policy-making. Examples from the Northumberland County Council case study show how the facilitation of CTCC can involve bottom-up informal processes of engagement such as chance encounters, the personalities of the actors involved, and the development of inter-personal relationships. A new link that developed with a twin city arose from an informal discussion between councillors about a football match leading to exchange visits for children between schools. Another new link with a different city arose from a chance meeting in a hotel bar between a County and overseas councillor (Interview, 2006: EU Funds Officer, Northumberland County Council).

The Aberdeen City Council case study is drawn upon to show how links between institutions can emerge because of the complexities of top-down and bottom-up drivers. Aberdeen City Council was involved in an EU Objective 3 (social) funded trans-European network project from 2002 to 2004, called DEMOS. Whilst the top-down driver of this project had been through funding by the EU, the instigation of Aberdeen City Council's involvement in DEMOS was through bottom-up formal and informal bi-lateral arrangements, by the influence of Edinburgh City Council. Edinburgh decided to apply for Objective 3 funding to set-up the DEMOS project on the principle that the project would assist knowledge exchange between cities on innovative ideas in the development of local governance and community engagement. Edinburgh invited Aberdeen City Council and five other European local authorities (Antwerp from Belgium, Utrecht from Holland, Turque in Finland, Kiosk in Greece, Krakoff in Poland) to be funded partners in the project. Edinburgh's motivation to apply and set-up the project concerned their interest in community planning. They considered how they were going to decentralize decision-making, develop local participatory forums, and support community initiatives through the funding. The role of informal processes and chance encounters has played an important role in Aberdeen City Council becoming involved in DEMOS. The Community Planning Officer notes:

> They [Edinburgh] invited Aberdeen because its chief executive was speaking to the Edinburgh chief executive in the week that they were having to sort this out and he asked Aberdeen's chief executive if Aberdeen wanted to be

involved (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

The above statement highlights the importance of the seniority of members in driving a local authority's involvement in networks. However, the Community Planning Officer also suggests that Aberdeen City Council became involved in the DEMOS project because it was trying to develop and extend the community engagement work it was undertaking. The council considered DEMOS to be an opportunity to learn from others that had similar agendas. Aberdeen was trying to establish an electronic questionnaire for its website where citizens could inform the council about their concerns and priorities and was also in the processes of developing a young people's website. Importantly, the Community Planning Officer explains that funding was not a motivational reason to be involved in the network, although the funding had a significant impact in helping to develop the website projects. The funding Aberdeen received was a few thousand pounds to support the projects and to pay for its staff to participate in meetings at the various member cities for a couple of days, where each local authority shared its innovative knowledge with the other authorities. The DEMOS project illustrates how there can be a complexity of top-down and bottom-up drivers in the mobilization of networks. The Demos example also shows how Type I CTCC and Type II CTCC can overlap. Involvement in networks by local authority practitioners can involve both funding and voluntary drivers. In summary, whilst the governance literature gives recognition to formal top-down drivers of CTCC such as European programmes and LA 21, quite often the facilitation of CTCC is down to chance encounters, and the building up of inter-personal relationships through formal and informal bi-lateral processes of interaction. The development of inter-personal relationships is recognized in the governance networks literature as being important to facilitating co-operation within networks (Jessop, 2003; Leitner et al., 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Scharpf, 1997), albeit this is not discussed within the context of being drivers of these. The drivers to motivate participation in CTCC can relate to the availability of project finance from within the authority, a genuine interest in the learning that can take place, and the influence and seniority of actors.

4.3.2 Maintaining Links between Local Authorities

The twin cities literature (Andreason, 2001; Cremmer et al., 2001; Ewen and Hebbert, 2007) and the literature that documents the emergence of local authority networks (Evans and Theobald, 2003; Ewen and Hebbert, 2007; Lafferty and Eckerberg, 1998) (Section 4.1) is informative as to the drivers of CTCC. However, with the exception of the recognition that a funding resource (e.g. through EU funding programmes) supports links between local authorities, it has less to say about the extent to which these links are maintained or fade way. The same can be said for the literature that promotes the idea of self-organizational networks – for example, Leitner and Sheppard (2002); Marcussen and Torfing (2003) and Rhodes (1997). The following examples show that there is a combination of factors responsible for maintaining links, ranging from dependency on funding through to the personality of the actors involved. In the case of Plymouth City Council and its Black Sea environmental town twinning project, once the EU funding stopped the liaison between the two cities also ceased. The link is also related to the role of actors and politics, because the new Mayor of Novorossiysk decided that he wanted to develop the city his own way, and he sacked the personnel who were involved in the links when he took over in office. Furthermore, practitioners are increasingly directing resources towards achieving statutory targets associated with the modernisation agenda (Section 4.1.3). Thus, the complexities that Best Value as an integral part of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) involves, and the strain on local authority's resources is well documented. Rashman and Radnor (2005) note for example that aside from local authorities assessing their own performance, they are also required to 'publish Best Value Performance Plans, undertake Best Value Reviews and develop Action Plans' (Rashman and Radnor, 2005, p. 19-20). In summary, it is addressing specified statutory and related performance targets that drive practitioner's work. In the case of Plymouth City Council, their twinning links have largely been disbanded and discontinued because of this:

> If it ain't written down as a priority, you don't do it ... but it does mean that some of the nice things like developing our twinning arrangements with Novorossiysk and San Sebastian, and Plymouth Massachusetts and all the rest of it, if it's not essential we are not doing it, it's a pity ... and it is not a

> statutory obligation to have a Twinning Officer or twinning committee (Interview, 2006: Corporate Performance Manager, Plymouth City Council).

Similarly, in the instance of Northumberland County Council and their twinning arrangements, one of the main reasons why these have faded is because there are not enough financial resources from the Council to finance the visits, which is entwined with the politics of local governance – for example, a councillor from each political party is required to go on the exchange visits (Interview, 2006: European Funds Department Officer, Northumberland County Council). Other reasons why the links have faded include: actors involved in the links left the Council, two local authority actors fell out with each other, and policy has moved on from the role of local authorities in twinning arrangements to involve other governance actors (e.g. school and community exchanges):

> Our twin cities have fallen by the wayside now, but traditionally this has been about ceremonial relations through council member's exchange. Now European links are more about school and community exchanges (Interview, 2006: European Funds Department Officer, Northumberland County Council).

In the case of Aberdeen City Council's involvement in the DEMOS project, links with Edinburgh have faded because of the high turnover of staff that can take place in local government:

> It is difficult to say if the DEMOS project improved our relation with Edinburgh city as they have had a turnover of personnel, so the people that we were working with are not there any more, or not doing the same job anymore (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

Another reason as to why networks can fade is because the top-down drivers that have promoted sustainable development and the concepts of CTCC are no longer as effective as they used to be, because priorities change. For example, findings from the Plymouth City Council case study suggest that within the UK sustainable development networks have not been promoted as being as important as well as they may have been by the Local Government Management Board (now the IDeA). It had a more active role as a

driver of CTCC in its promotion of sustainable development networks, for example, the promotion of LA 21 Officer meetings within the UK:

> Up until a few years ago the LGMB had a sustainable development unit that ran a sustainable conference. It was held every year at different local authorities, and it was an opportunity for the LA 21 Officers to get together, and pool experience and expertise on a number of issues that are up and coming. It's a really sore point. Basically LGMB was disbanded when community planning came in. The government decided there was no point in doing that conference anymore, but in fact, the value of that national event was just unbelievable, and we really miss that opportunity of getting together (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council).

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that of the four case study local authorities initially involved in the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign network (ESCTC) only Aberdeen City Council has re-asserted its commitment to this network by joining the Aalborg+10 network. Of the practitioners across the four case studies interviewed, only those in Plymouth City Council and Aberdeen City Council had heard about the Aalborg+10 network.

4.4 Conclusions

Five main findings emerge from this chapter. First, as Section 4.1 has shown, there is a complexity of top-down and bottom-up drivers of CTCC that permeate the political landscape. In particular these have related to PL/PT as a process of governing. Top-down drivers for UK-based local authorities include the promotion of CTCC from the United Nations, funding incentives and policy guidance from the EU, and central government legislation. Second, the overall empirical findings illustrate that local authorities are more likely to be involved in the UK domestic arena. The substantive material of this thesis suggests that the drivers of CTCC taking place overseas are not as prominent or effective as they have been when compared to past analysis. It is possible that the empirical survey which has sampled approximately seven percent of UK-based

local authorities is not broad enough to grasp the extent to which transnational co-operation is taking place. However, it might be that governing through European funds which the literature has considered to have been a normal form of engagement over the last twenty years is less so now. For example, the funds are no longer available or local authorities are not eligible for them, although there is also the bureaucracy in the administrative processes involved in applying for these (Chapter Six). Interestingly, the empirical findings have not referred to key policy initiatives of the EU to be instrumental in driving CTCC –for example, the Fifth Environmental Action Plan, or the Framework for Action for Sustainable Development Action in the EU (Section 4.1.2). This may reflect that these are not effective in driving CTCC.

Third, the lobbying role of local authorities (Type III CTCC) has not emerged from the empirical findings or the literature to be a significant governing process of CTCC. This may reflect the fact that the evidence of CTCC drivers facilitating this is limited. However, this chapter has drawn attention to the role of neighbouring local authorities in project-working, in the delivery of projects on the ground, for example, the development of city and district waste management strategies. Chapter Six explores in greater detail the role of actors and resources as key factors that enable and constrain project working in the delivery of projects on the ground.

Fourth, links between local authorities are more likely to be of an informal nature and involve Type II CTCC. The exception to informality is where local authorities undertake mandatory benchmarking activities between each other as a consequence of Best Value (Chapter Five). The role of Best Value illustrates that there are contradictory understandings in the drivers of CTCC, for example, whether CTCC is driven through top-down meta-governance and hierarchy (Type I CTCC), or through bottom-up self-organizational means (Type II CTCC), all these approaches facilitate CTCC. The drivers of CTCC illustrate how the governance spaces within which CTCC takes place involves a combination of meta-governance, hierarchy, and self-organizational modes of governing which is taken into consideration throughout forthcoming chapters. The point here is that plurality of approaches that drive CTCC can be mutually supportive in allowing for governance and governing to take place through networks and partnerships, albeit that examples of meta-governance failure in the literature are not discussed (Chapter Two). Chapter Six draws on the thesis'

substantive material to inform these debates. Furthermore, it is ambitious to suggest that CTCC through self-organizational networks is a higher form of governing that is proactively shaping Europeanization or national policy, because lobbying as a governing process of CTCC has not been identified as a key empirical finding of the surveys or case studies. Rather, this chapter has suggested that CTCC is an activity of local government practice. It is a form of governance as links between institutions are forged; and a process of governing to achieve sustainable development objectives through networks/partnerships. Nevertheless, CTCC clearly has an important role in the political landscape in the implementation and delivery of local policy making, which is illustrated by the various drivers facilitating CTCC.

Finally, the dependency on funding for CTCC to take place, demonstrates the significance of financial resources in the motivation of actors to be involved in networks cannot be underestimated (Chapter Two). However, the fact that links can be temporary and can rapidly fade as they can be dependent on funds has implications for the effectiveness of formal drivers of networks/partnerships, and for the ways in which local authorities are understood to govern and work together through European funds. The facilitation of CTCC and the links that are maintained involves a combination of drivers and mechanisms of CTCC. Given that one of the most significant findings in this chapter is the role of PL/PT in CTCC, the nature and processes of how this takes place is examined in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Policy Learning and Policy Transfer

The objective of this chapter is to explore the rationality of policy learning and policy transfer (PL/PT) between local authorities, and to examine the governing processes that take place through CTCC within a transnational and UK-based domestic setting. The four case studies are drawn upon to examine the relationships and connections that can take place between practitioners where PL/PT is undertaken. In turn, this informs understanding about why and how this takes place. PL/PT is important in relation to CTCC because it is seen by governance analysts and policy-makers to be important in governing process in local governance – a way that local authorities can inform and implement more effective local policy-making. However, a review of the PL/PT literature (Section 5.1) highlights that less is known about the 'how' of PL/PT at the local level. The chapter is structured as follows. The first section introduces the role of PL/PT in urban sustainability. The second section informs the PL/PT debate through examining formal and informal networks and partnerships. The typology of CTCC which has been developed in Chapter Two (Section 2.3) is drawn-upon to aid analysis of CTCC within the PL/PT debate. The third section draws attention to the use of best practice as a specific conduit of PL/PT. This is to understand more about how knowledge and ideas travel in the PL/PT process. The fourth section examines the role of benchmarking in PL/PT. To date, little is understood about the role of the state in shaping PL/PT and the rise of 'benchmarking' makes this important. Finally, section five draws conclusions.

5.1 The Role of Policy Learning and Policy Transfer in Urban Sustainability

This section introduces the role of PL/PT in urban sustainability, and explores the difference between the two notions. It discusses the reasons why PL/PT is seen to be important to the governance debates on the restructuring of the state, and shift from government to governance (Chapter Two) and CTCC. The meanings of tacit and explicit knowledge are defined, and the significance of policy learning through formal and informal networks whilst drawing on arguments about virtual (non-human contact) and physical (face-to-face) engagement is discussed.

5.1.1 The Policy Learning and Policy Transfer Debates

Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) suggest that the notions of PL/PT are concerned with:

> Knowledge about how policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political setting (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000, p. 5).

The notions of PL/PT emerged in the 1990s when political scientists began to draw on them to understand the changing nature of public policy in the EU with the emergence of network governance and policy networks, and in the UK in the shift from government to governance (Benz and Furst, 2002; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; James, 2003; Peck and Tickell, 2002) (for a critique see James and Lodge, 2003) (Section 2.2). However, most research about PL/PT involves analysis of policy change between states rather than at the sub-national level (Benz and Furst 2002; Bulkeley, 2006; Davies and Evans 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Peck and Tickell, 2002). Nevertheless, these governance scholars suggest that the frameworks adopted at national levels can be used for analysis of PL/PT between sub-national actors. This is because PL/PT is relevant to understanding the spread of policy ideas and policy implementation at the local level in line with the restructuring of the state and the shift from government to governance.

A review of the literature (Benz and Furst, 2002; Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Stone, 2001; Wolman and Page, 2002) shows that with the exception of Bulkeley (2006), Benz and Furst (2002), and Wolman and Page (2002), less is known about the 'how' of PL/PT at the local level; the purpose of this section is thus to inform these debates. PL/PT is a key process through which governing takes place within CTCC. Chapter Two has highlighted how sub-national actors (i.e. local authorities and private actors in networks) are purported by scholars that study self-organizational forms of governing (Bulkeley, 2004; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a) to voluntarily draw on the expertise and experiences of each other to inform their own policy-making to address sustainable development.

The core principle of 'why' PL/PT is undertaken, is that by drawing on the experience of another institution or actor it will allow for the learning and sharing of best practices for more effective policy-making and improved service delivery (increased performance) at the local level (Brenner, 2004; Coleman and Perl, 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Stone, 2004; Rashman and Hartley, 2002). Best or recognised good practice is undertaken to avoid re-inventing the wheel, and is used in a problem solving capacity to allow an exchange of ideas, to promote learning, and to prevent making mistakes that can be avoided (Section 5.3). Within this context, Radaelli (2000) notes the significance of policy learning because of mimetism 'coping with uncertainty by imitating organizations perceived to be more legitimate or more successful' (Radaelli, 2002, p. 28). Although the terms PL/PT are often used interchangeably and are suggested to have many overlaps, they refer to two separate concepts/broad approaches – one sees transfer as a subset of learning (Bulkeley, 2006; Richardson, 2000 citing Wolman 1992; Stone, 2001) while the other sees learning as a subset of transfer (Bulkeley, 2006 citing Bennet and Howlett, 1992). In the first approach, transfer is seen as part of the wider processes (within policy networks) of the learning process, and an outcome of learning:

> Policy transfer as a form of policy-orientated learning requires not only the acquisition of knowledge but also utilization of the knowledge about policies elsewhere. At a minimum, this means taking the knowledge into account in policy learning (Wolman and Page, 2002, p. 478).

Therefore, policy transfer is both shaped and underpinned by the policy learning process that involves learning and then transferring the information into a different setting, for example, through conferences, and workshops. However, crucially, policy transfer can occur without learning, and learning may not lead to policy transfer or other policy outcomes (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Stone, 2001; Wolman and Page, 2002). Whilst 'the process of policy learning is extremely complex' (Richardson, 2000, p. 1020), Betsill and Bulkeley (2004) and Bulkeley (2006) usefully distinguish three main interpretations of policy learning from the literature to help its conceptualization. The first interpretation is that the policy goal is not altered, but the approach to achieving it is. Learning is seen as a rational process in which new knowledge is either sought after to address the policy problem, or is

produced. This can, for example, involve considering the range of policy options that can be used to address a policy problem. Thus, actions are changed but the intention is to lead to the same outcome. An illustration of this is changing the policy measures used, such as switching from increasing the tax on petrol to a congestion charge as an attempt to control greenhouse gas emissions. This first interpretation of policy learning is also known 'as single loop learning' (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1033 citing Argryis and Schon, 1978), 'simple learning' (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1033 citing Jachtenfuchs, 1996), or 'lesson drawing' (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1033 citing Rose, 1993).

The second interpretation of learning is also seen as a rational process. The policy goals may be altered where new knowledge is produced about the policy problem – this can be alongside the alteration of the approach to the policy problem as new knowledge is learnt/produced (Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006). Various terms for this include 'double-loop learning' (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1033 citing Argryis and Schon 1978), 'social learning' (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1033 citing Hall, 1993), and 'complex learning' (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1033 citing Jachtenfuchs, 1996). Unlike the second, the third interpretation is an argumentative approach. It is not concerned with how policy change is a response to new knowledge produced. Rather, analysis concerns the ways in which new knowledge shapes new understandings and shifting paradigms of the policy problem and influences the outcome (Bulkeley, 2006). Thus, analysis of how learning takes place focuses on the arguing, disagreements, bargaining out of solutions, competing discourses, and outcomes to the policy problem. It concerns analysis of the main actors that hold the power and persuasion power to convince others their way is right, and that things should stay the same or there should be policy change.

The second approach that sees policy learning as a subset of policy transfer has been developed by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000). They have been at the forefront of British political science in developing a policy transfer conceptual framework. The emphasis of the policy transfer literature is on understanding that it is a kind of action as it is a:

> Process by which policies and practices move from exporter to importer jurisdictions, especially the agents of policy transfer and the processes of decision making in the importer jurisdictions (Stone, 2001, p. 8).

The processes of policy transfer may take place between individuals or organizations (Stone, 2001). Despite the general absence in the PL/PT literature as to 'how' policy transfer occurs at the local level, Dolowitz and Marsh identify eight different categories that can be transferred, although there is less conceptualization about how the transfer takes place: 'policy goals, policy content, policy instruments [policy], policy programs, institutions, ideologies, ideas and attitudes and negative lessons' (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000, p. 12) (Table 5.1). Stone (2004) notes a slightly different framework. She refers to the processes of 'soft' and 'hard' policy transfer as categories or things that can be transferred. 'Soft' transfer includes ideas, paradigms, lessons, problem definitions and policy definitions. 'Hard' transfer involves instruments, legislation, and policy approaches. Both frameworks recognize that transfer can range from emulation (i.e. the transfer of the ideas behind the policy or programme) and incomplete transfer, through to transfer of the complete package. Note therefore that policy transfer can be a policy process (e.g. in the transfer of an idea, policy, and instrument), and can lead to policy and learning outcomes. An example of a policy outcome is the implementation of a programme. An example of a learning outcome is the knowledge gained from negative lessons learnt that can be used in the policy implementation to allow for more effective policy-making.

Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) give advice regarding the problems that incomplete transfer can create – for example, the processes may not be fully understood, or the end product not of the quality that it should be. It is not the intention of this chapter to identify whether policy learning should be seen as a sub-set of policy transfer or vice-versa. Rather, both approaches are drawn upon to explore how learning and/or transfer takes place within the context of the substantive material of this chapter. That is, the three main interpretations of policy learning discussed above are drawn upon to explore policy learning processes within CTCC. Likewise, the policy transfer categories outlined by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) (Table 5.1) and Stone (2004) are taken into consideration in exploring how policy within the context of CTCC is transferred. However, Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) and Stone (2004) do not engage in discussions about how specifics within the categories are transferred. To inform these debates, the three CTCC type framework developed in Chapter Two (Section 2.3) is drawn upon to explore governing processes. The CTCC typology framework is useful for analysis of

PL/PT as it can help to develop knowledge about the relative autonomy and the key characteristics of governing through local authority networks and partnerships.

Table 5.1 A Policy Transfer Framework

Why Transfer? Continuum: Want To..... Have To			Who Is Involved in Transfer?	What Is Transferred?	From Where			Degrees of Transfer	Constraints on Transfer	How To Demonstrate Policy Transfer	How Transfer leads to Policy Failure
Voluntary	Mixtures	Coercive			Past	Within-a Nation	Cross-National				
Lesson Drawing (Perfect Rationality)	Lesson Drawing (Bounded Rationality)	Direct Imposition	Elected Officials	Policies (Goals) (content) (instruments)	Internal	State Governments	International Organizations	Copying	Policy Complexity (Newspaper) (Magazine) (TV) (Radio)	Media	Uniformed Transfer
	International Pressures (Image) (Consensus) (Perceptions)		Bureaucrats Civil Servants	Programs	Global	City Governments	Regional State Local Governments	Emulation	Past Policies	Reports (Commissioned) (uncommissioned)	Incomplete Transfer
	Externalities	Pressure Groups	Institutions			Local Authorities		Mixtures	Structural Institutional	Conferences	Inappropriate Transfer
	Conditionality (Loans) (Conditions Attached to Business Activity)	Political Parties	Ideologies					Inspiration	Feasibility (Ideology) (cultural proximity) (technology) (economic) (bureaucratic)	Meetings / Visits	
	Obligations	Policy Entrepreneurs/ Experts	Attitudes / Cultural Values						Language	Statements (written) (verbal)	
			Consultants Think Tanks Transnational Corporations Supranational Institutions	Negative Lessons			Past Relations				

Source: Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p. 9).

5.1.2. Practices of Policy Learning and Policy Transfer

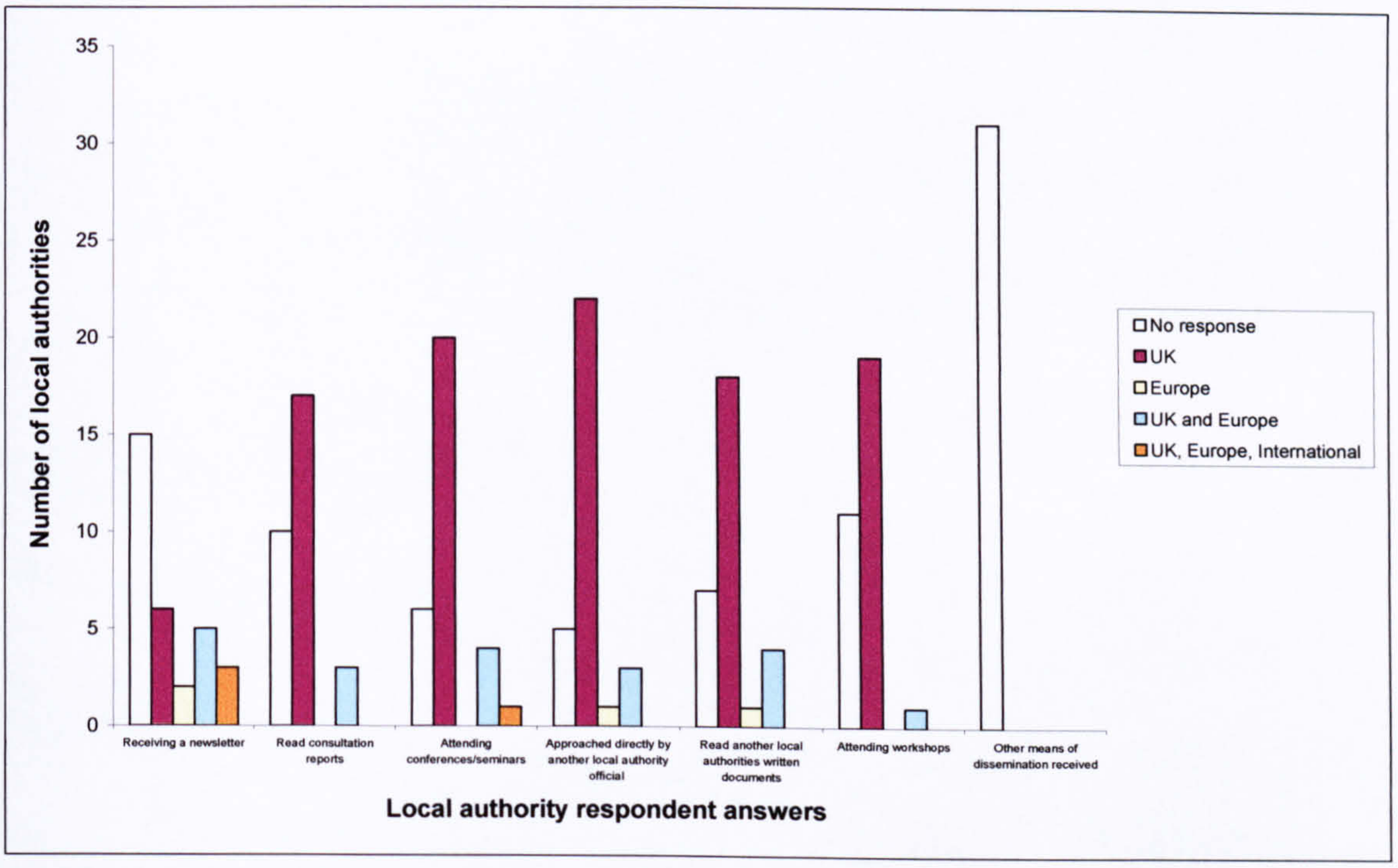
There are two axes along which the practices of PL/PT can vary. The first concerns the extent to which PL/PT is explicit or tacit. The second relates to the extent to which interaction is 'real' or 'virtual'. The first critical dimension of the practices of PL/PT analysed in this thesis is the role of tacit and explicit forms of knowledge. Tacit knowledge relates to beliefs and perspectives and operational skills. This is learnt through inter-personal processes of interaction – for example, tacit knowledge can be developed through face-to-face engagement in discussing problems and sharing experiences. It also involves learning through applied action and active participation such as through workshops and conferences (Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Rashman et al., 2005). The internet can also be used to develop tacit knowledge, for example in-depth e-mail exchanges, and interactive forums (e.g. on the Local Government Association website) can be used by actors to discuss policy problems.

Tacit knowledge is supposed to allow for more effective local policy-making and improvements in policy delivery, as the quality of learning is greater when compared to the less direct explicit forms of engagement (Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Rashman et al., 2005). Learning through explicit engagement involves more formalized processes of articulation, such as drawing on knowledge from statistical performance data (e.g. league tables, data-bases), or the reading of policy documents. Explicit learning can involve using the internet to browse websites for information, download reports and documents, and can involve e-mail exchanges both formal and informal to address a policy problem. Therefore, explicit knowledge is not always formal, just as tacit knowledge is not always informal. Tacit knowledge allows for a more in-depth understanding of the policy problem, and therefore a more effective resolution. Learning activities, for example, can allow for more hands-on engagement which in turn can enable learning to more readily occur because actors can get a more tangible sense of how another local authority addresses its issues (Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Rashman et al., 2005). Local authorities, for example, draw on key learning points from participating in events and related activities to implement this knowledge into policy reforms. Subsequent improvements in service outcomes can be measured by a range of accountable mechanisms, for example performance indicators and local community satisfaction (Rashman et al., 2005).

However, as Stone (2004) notes, learning through tacit knowledge is also likely to be more time consuming and therefore more expensive for local authorities to undertake. In drawing on the typology of the CTCC framework (Section 2.3), Type I CTCC implies there is more likely to be more formal processes of governing and in-depth tacit learning between local authorities as is discussed in Section 5.4, than is found in Type's II and III. This is because there is a stronger control over local authority networks and partnerships from a meta-governor (e.g. the state). In contrast, Type's II and III, that are associated with voluntary forms of networks and partnerships, can involve the use of both tacit and explicit knowledge in policy learning (Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2). Local authority practitioners might attend workshops and conferences to develop tacit knowledge, or develop explicit knowledge through drawing on statistical performance data.

The findings from a survey that was sent to two hundred directors of UK-based regeneration partnerships found that the most useful and one of the more prominent means of learning is through conversations with officials (Wolman and Page, 2002). However, the extent to which this is an explicit or tacit form of knowledge is unclear. For example, it is not clear whether this is through face-to-face contact, which can be conducive for tacit learning as more in-depth discussions can take place concerning the policy problem, or over the telephone. Telephone conversations can also involve tacit learning if the depth of the conversation allows for a detailed understanding of the policy problem to occur. The thesis survey findings concur that for UK-based interaction, local authorities prefer to use direct means of engagement to draw on policy learning (21 out of 31 respondents) (Figure 5.1). However, only 4 respondents are directly involved with European counterparts (3 respondents stated they have direct contact with both UK and European authorities; 1 respondent stated that he/she is involved with Europe). No local authority respondents suggest that they have interaction with international counterparts – this may reflect the general limited transnational co-operation taking place (Chapter Four). Similar findings can be found where a local authority shares its learning/experience and policy knowledge with another. In terms of domestic CTCC, this is most likely to take place through direct means of engagement (16 respondents) (Figure 5.2). Whilst direct contact was considered the most popular means of sharing knowledge with European counterparts, only 5 respondents are involved in this (3 respondents suggested they are involved with both UK and European authorities; 2 respondents suggested they are involved with only European ones). There was no direct contact through international relations concerning PL/PT.

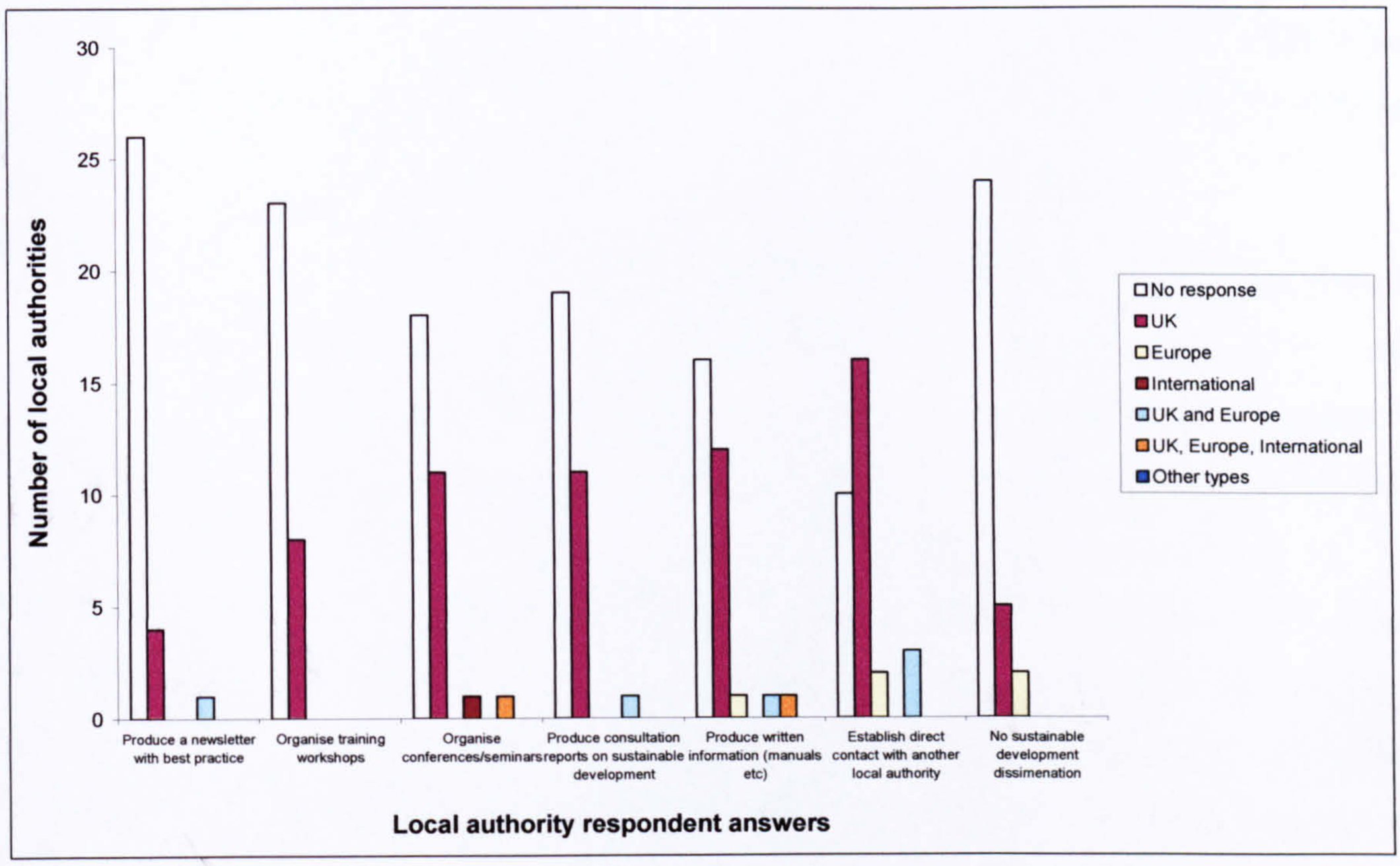
Figure 5.1 Ways of Obtaining Information



Wolman and Page (2002) have also noted that drawing on information from good practice guides and central government publications is highly valued as a means of learning. Thus, they draw attention to the role of explicit knowledge in policy learning. For domestic CTCC, the survey findings of this thesis agree that explicit knowledge is used extensively in PL/PT – respondents suggest that both the drawing on and sharing of documents by local authorities with one another, particularly in the domestic arena is important. For example, 18 respondents have read other local authorities' written information manuals, and 17 have read consultation reports (Figure 5.1). There were 12 respondents that had shared their written information such as manuals, and 11 respondents note other authorities had read their consultation reports (Figure 5.2). However, there is considerably less interaction concerning the learning and sharing of documents for local authorities with overseas counterparts; 5 respondents have drawn on an information manual to read (1 respondent is involved with a European authority while 4 are involved with both the UK and Europe), and 3 had read consultation reports (these local authorities have undertaken this in both UK and European interaction). Furthermore, there were no individual local authorities that had drawn on these materials internationally (Figure 5.1). In terms of the sharing of documents, 2 respondents have noted that their respective local authorities have shared their information manuals with those overseas (1 respondent is involved with a European

authority and 1 is involved with both UK and Europe), but there has been no international co-operation concerning this. Similarly, only 1 respondent has suggested that a European counterpart has read his/her local authority's consultation report – there is no reference to international co-operation in this way (Figure, 5.2). In summary, the limited CTCC taking place through the use of documents may reflect the general limited transnational co-operation taking place that has been discussed in Chapter Four.

Figure 5.2 Types of Dissemination



The second dimension to the practice of PL/PT which was found to be important in the thesis is the extent to which it takes place through real or 'virtual' forms of interaction. Virtual interaction – non-human contact – was particularly important between local authorities when it was undertaken on a voluntary basis. Whilst the PL/PT literature (e.g. Rashman et al., 2005) does recognize that web-based material can be used in learning and transfer, the use of cyberspace is generally not discussed in the literature that examines self-organizational forms of governing. The second generation of governance network theorists (e.g. Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Peters and Pierre, 2002; Rhodes, 1998; Scharpf, 1997; Skelcher et al., 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005, 2007a, 2007b), for example, have drawn attention to the nature and characteristics of governance networks. They have argued that the build-up of trust and inter-personal

relationships through face-to-face engagement is very important in allowing for successful governing in networks to take place. Second generation network studies have been inspired by the notion of first generation networks - policy networks (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996) - that have drawn attention to the role of networks as a form of governance (Section 2.2.2). Second generation network theorists argue that over time, through the development of inter-personal relationships, actors trust each other to adhere to their respective responsibilities and feel a duty to contribute to achieving common goals and objectives – thus, actors want to co-operate together. Furthermore, the build-up of trust and development of inter-personal relationships allows for the exchange of ideas in developing new understandings, despite any disputes and disagreements that might arise.

However, Barry (2001), Jessop (2002), and Thrift (1996) note the role of cyberspace in linking cities and institutions, and how spaces are created through connections – for example the internet as a virtual space. In exploring how urban development is influenced by how spaces are used between actors, Asheim et al., (2007, p. 659) note: 'in various circumstances, face-to-face communication has been replaced by, for example, e-mail correspondence'. Helling et al., (2005) have explored the use of virtual networks in the environmental sector as a means to access environmental data and as a communication platform to discuss environmental issues and policies. They argue that virtual networks have the potential to address international environmental concerns as they do not have national borders. Therefore, virtual networks can facilitate co-operation between actors at an international level as they connect actors and institutions and 'are an essential instrument to develop solutions in the face of the global environmental challenge' (Helling et al., 2005, p. 336). Helling et al., define a virtual network on the following premise:

> The term 'virtual' is used pragmatically in the sense of 'net based', 'on the Internet' or 'online' by the authors here (Schulmeister, 2002). Therefore, a virtual network within the environmental sector is defined as an internet-based interconnection of actors (Helling et al., 2005, p. 335).

This definition of a virtual network is somewhat simplistic and vague. However, this concept can be developed within the context of CTCC to develop a notion of how actors

can govern through 'virtual governance networks'. Policy transfer can take place as policies, programmes and negative lessons (Table 5.1) can be transferred through internet-based interaction to develop and inform local policy-making in addressing sustainable development objectives. To undertake the transfer, actors can use the internet to draw on explicit (e.g. website-based material, downloaded documents) or tacit learning (e.g. interactive forums, in-depth e-mail exchanges). The extent to which PL/PT allows for more effective policy-making through virtual governance networks compared to physical engagement is discussed throughout this chapter. Whilst in their overall survey findings Wolman and Page (2002) did not find the use of the internet to be very prominent, research by Bulkeley (2006) has highlighted the significance of explicit learning through the use of the internet, for example in drawing on case-studies presented in reports, policy documents, policy guidance, and publications. Similarly, the empirical findings as discussed in the following two sections generally show that virtual interaction has an important role in PL/PT for both formal and informal networks and partnerships. In summary, virtual interaction, face-to-face engagement, and the development of tacit and explicit knowledge as practices of PL/PT can take place in formal or informal networks. Furthermore, the empirical findings also show that both tacit and explicit policy learning is possible through virtual governance networks.

5.2 Policy Learning through Formal and Informal Networks

Formal networks involve procedures that are carried out by actors within a network structure that has rules and convention. Thus, understandings of formal networks are applicable to Type I CTCC. In Type I CTCC, rules and conventions are imposed on the network actors from an external meta-governor (e.g. European Commission, or central government). In contrast, whilst informal networks and partnerships can also have established rules and regulations, the informality aspect implies that the procedure and structure of the network or partnership is unofficial, more personal, relaxed, easy going, flexible and fluid (Elliott et al., 2001). This understanding is applicable to analysis of Type II CTCC. There may be some guidance on the running of the network from an external meta-governor (e.g. central government), but interaction between this and the network actors is more informal rather than strong control. Type II CTCC can also be formal, but the rules and convention are established from within the network, by its

participants, rather than an external meta-governor – for example, Marcussen and Torfing's (2003) definition of governance networks is applicable within this context (Section 2.2.2). The substantive findings of this research suggest that there is likely to be greater opportunity for face-to-face engagement through formal rather than informal networks, for example, workshops and conferences. However, this does not necessarily mean that local authorities attend, or that learning takes place. Given the centrality of this distinction to the analysis of how PL/PT takes place, the next two sections examine these types of networks in more detail to examine the processes and practice of PL/PT with reference to the case-study findings.

5.2.1 The Nature of Learning in Formal Networks

This section examines how policy learning takes place within formal networks. The key argument is that formal networks can facilitate transfer/learning and that this is valued by practitioners because it (a) saves time and (b) addresses the 'must do' agenda. However, because of financial and time resource constraints, local authorities are more likely to engage with these networks through virtual means, rather than through face-to-face interaction. Nevertheless, the means of learning through virtual interaction involves both explicit and tacit learning. In support of these points, three formal networks are drawn upon: Aberdeen County Council's involvement within the Trans Municipal Networks (TMNs) Aalborg+10 and East Scotland European Consortium (ESEC) is examined; and an exploration of it's involvement in the national network the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) is undertaken[42]. Aberdeen City Council became a member of the Aalborg+10 network by signing up to the Aalborg commitments (Section 4.1.2). The council decided to sign up to the commitments as they could use the principles behind them as a structure for developing the city's Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS)[43]. The Aalborg+10 network is an example of Type II CTCC. Not only is participation by actors in this network undertaken on a voluntary

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[42] Other formal networks that have been highlighted in Chapter Four (e.g. Table 4.2) are not discussed here as the practitioners interviewed did not provide detailed information about them. This means that how the processes of interaction take place within them could not be explored. Whilst these networks can still be important, involvement by practitioners within them have been as a named member only.

[43] An SDS is being developed and produced as actors decided that the Community Plan had lost its environmental focus (Chapter Three).

basis, but the regulation and control is not strong in principle by the co-organisers that run it (City of Aalborg; Council of European Municipalities and Regions, and ICLEI). The organizers do not have the 'power over' (Dowding, 1995) (Chapters Two and Six) to control the activities of participants, or ensure that they address the ten sustainable development commitments of the network (Section 4.1.2). Thus, participants have the freedom to be as active or as inactive in the networks activities as they choose. Practitioners from Aberdeen City Council explain how the use of the Aalborg commitments can save time developing a structure to demonstrate how they are achieving sustainable development, a requirement of the Scotland Local Government Act 2003:

> We signed the Aalborg commitments as part of the SDS review. We have used the Aalborg commitments to set our base-line: how far have we achieved, and what do we need to achieve. This will inform hugely the actual development of the strategy because you could go out and reinvent them but you would still come up with what the Aalborg commitments are asking you to achieve (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

> From the council's point of view LA 21 was starting to wane and the Scotland Act in 2003 came in that the council should achieve sustainable development as part of the Act. So every council has to show that they are committed to sustainable development. Now what we have decided is that the Aalborg commitments are the best way for us to show that (Interview, 2006: Sustainability Co-ordinator, Aberdeen City Council).

Whilst membership is free, and local authority Policy Officers have attended Aalborg conferences in the past (i.e. through membership of the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign network and commitment to the original Aalborg Charter), most engagement has been of a virtual nature – browsing the Aalborg+10 website and downloading documents. There are three reasons for this. The first is that although the Aalborg commitments are supported by ICLEI-Europe, and there may be more on-going activity through this channel (i.e. conferences), the membership of ICLEI is expensive, and greater interaction within this network can be time consuming. Second,

the material/knowledge that can be drawn upon from the website is considered to suffice for the purposes of the commitments. The following quote supports these two points:

> If we were members with ICLEI, the Aalborg connection might be more interactive, but we find ICLEI very expensive, and that is a problem for us, we do not have a budget to join ICLEI. The fees depend on the size of the city and I think for the size of Aberdeen you are talking about £3000 to £4000 per year. To be honest the website is very good and you can download what you like. People like ICLEI tend to publish all their papers from their conferences, so you can tend to use that, and there is usually a contact point at the end of the paper so you can get a bit more information if you want. So that is available, but it comes back to how much time you have, and whether you are working on something different/unfamiliar to you (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

Third, the Aalborg+10 and ICLEI networks are generally European focused. Therefore, UK-based members do not feel like they are part of this set-up, and they limit their participation. The following two quotes illustrate this point:

> We are not members of ICLEI but we do get their routine updates about what is going on. I think it's a perfect example of how the UK sort of leaves itself on the edge and does not interact fully with its European partners as it probably should. I think this would be because of lack of time and European focus by UK local authorities. Apart from the opportunity to meet people over there, it's very difficult to get councils to actually understand they are part of Europe, so I think that's probably where a lot of it stems from (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

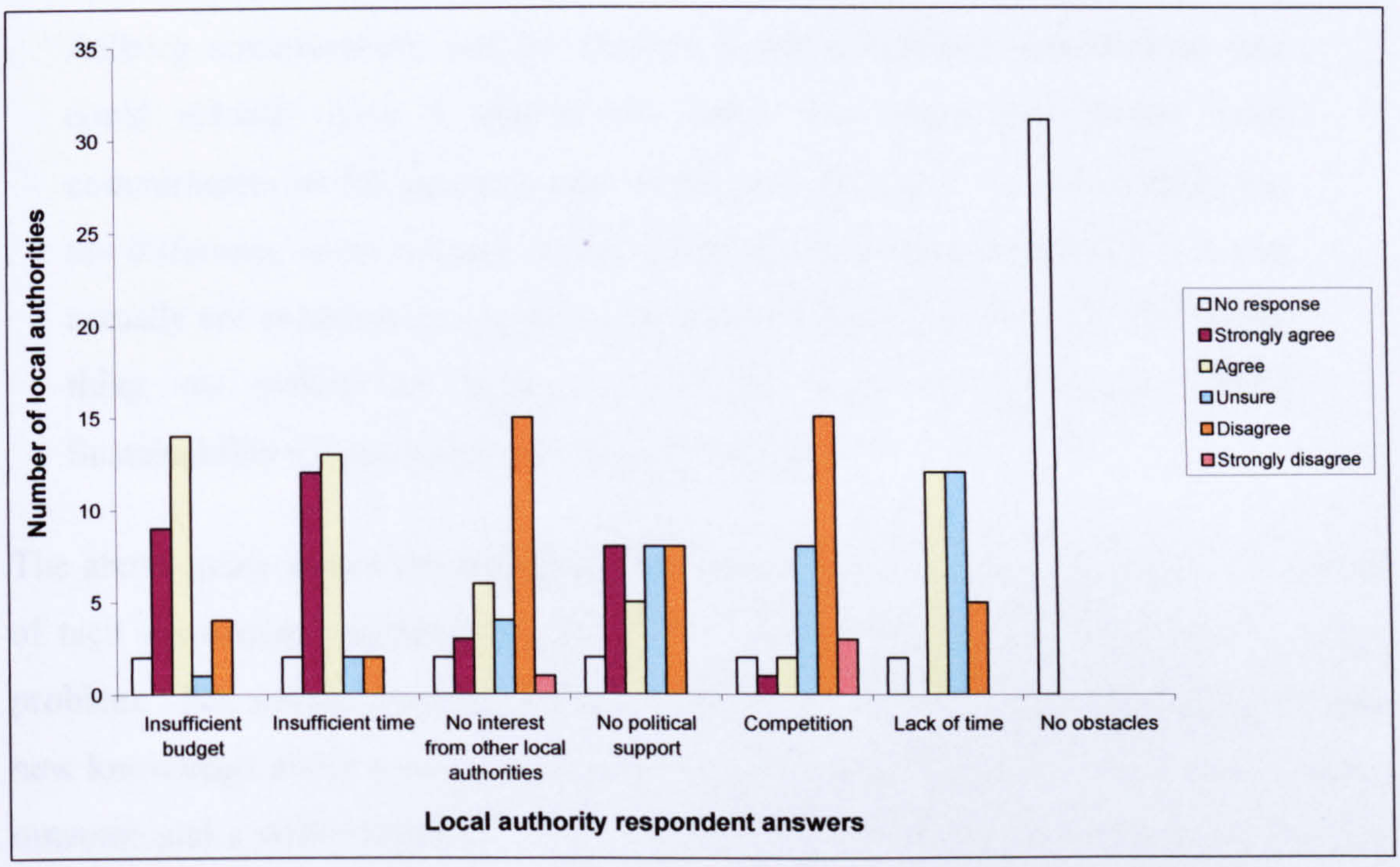
> The biggest hurdle is that the Aalborg commitments and conferences are actually in the EU, and a lot of it does relate to the EU, and it's actually linking it to the UK which is the biggest thing (Interview, 2006: Sustainability Co-ordinator, Aberdeen City Council).

In short, the costs of fully fledged membership and involvement in the Aalborg+10 and ICLEI networks outweigh the potential benefits that can be gained. However, it is possible to undertake more participatory involvement in the Aalborg+10 and ICLEI networks such as attending conferences, if practitioners consider this to be worthwhile. Interestingly, the empirical survey findings (Figure 5.1) suggest that within a UK context, practitioners consider attending conferences (20 respondents) for policy learning as more important than the overall case study findings have suggested. However, it might be that respondents are suggesting this to be a preferred rather than actual means of drawing on knowledge. As is reaffirmed in the quote taken from the Northumberland County Council case study below, conferences are expensive and time consuming:

> The smaller local authorities have less resources and therefore can't always send officers to meetings at regional events such as conferences as they have lots of competing demands on their time (Interview, 2006: North East Assembly Sustainable Development Policy Officer).

The survey findings suggest there is considerably less conference activity by UK-based local authorities overseas – only 4 respondents say that they have attended conferences in Europe (Figure 5.1). Further afield, only 1 respondent has suggested that he/she has attended an international conference. This lends further support to the arguments that more active forms of policy learning are not actually that important when the learning itself is costly and time consuming (e.g. attending conferences) (Stone, 2004). Figure 5.3 shows that respondents consider insufficient time (25 respondents) and budget (23 respondents) as the main obstacles to PL/PT.

Figure 5.3 Obstacles to PL/PT



Whilst virtual engagement has been the main means through which Aberdeen City Council has been involved with the Aalborg+10 network, there has been an exception. Policy Officers from this authority attended a workshop hosted by Hampshire County Council in September 2006 on the Aalborg commitments. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together all the UK signatories for the first time to discuss how they are using the Aalborg commitments and the progress that has been made in terms of these. There were two outcomes from the workshop. First (and as Aberdeen City Council had already realized on its own accord), the Policy Officer from Hampshire County Council suggested to the other UK signatories the usefulness of using the commitments as a framework for developing local SDSs[44]. The workshop was a formal event that involved formal processes of interaction with presentations and follow-up discussions on how the Aalborg commitments can be used in local policy-making to achieve sustainable development objectives. More specifically, the workshop informed Aberdeen City Council's ideas about how to use the commitments as a structure for their SDS:

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[44] Hampshire County Council wanted to arrange this workshop and to take the lead on the Aalborg commitments within the UK as they wanted to be the best in that field. Furthermore, they felt that somebody needed to take a lead as the commitments were not being aptly addressed by UK-based local authorities (Interview: Hampshire Sustainable Development Officer, 2006).

From talking to Hampshire we got the idea of using numbers to measure the Aalborg commitments, and we thought it was a brilliant idea because you could actually have a quantifiable value that when you review your commitments on the previous year or the year after that you can actually see the difference in an average or the difference in a commitment and you can actually see progress or something that has not made progress. So that is one thing we picked up from them at the workshop (Interview, 2006: Sustainability Co-ordinator, Aberdeen City Council).

The above quote shows the influence that face-to-face interaction and the development of tacit knowledge can have on practitioners' learning and understanding of a policy problem. The sustainability co-ordinator has drawn on single loop learning to develop new knowledge about a policy problem. Policy transfer has been a process, a learning outcome and a policy outcome. The sustainability co-ordinator has drawn on the idea (process) of using the number criteria as a policy instrument (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000) – a tool for measuring sustainability – to inform the development of Aberdeen City Council's Sustainable Development Strategy outcome, and to use it to measure progress in achieving sustainability within the city (learning and policy outcomes).

Second, practitioners decided at this workshop that in view of financial and time resource constraints, they would prefer further discussions/policy learning on the Aalborg+10 commitments to take place virtually (Interview, 2006: Sustainable Development Officer, Hampshire County Council)[45]. As an e-mail network this would allow members to share experiences, discuss policy problems, information and best practice with each other, compare progress, and raise the profile of the Aalborg commitments. Thus, whilst the academic PL/PT literature (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Stone, 2004) emphasises the use of face-to-face meetings, workshops, and conferences for tacit learning to be developed and policy transfer to take place, the role of virtual networks cannot be ignored. However, as Section 5.4 illustrates, when it comes to 'mandatory' modes of PL/PT, central government does not necessarily consider that virtual interaction can substitute for the quality of PL/PT that takes place through face-to-face interaction.

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45 http://www.aalborgplus10.dk/default.aspx?m=2&i=388 'Aalborg Commitments - UK Network Event September 12th 2006' [accessed 15th December 2007].

The second formal network examined is the East Scotland European Consortium (ESEC). This may be primarily identified as Type III CTCC, as it has a lobbying role in the EU; and practitioners have the autonomy in terms of financial resources to govern through the network as the ESEC is funded by each of its member local authorities (fourteen) in North East Scotland. The membership funds the employment of a staff member (based in Lanarkshire Council) to co-ordinate the network and to keep it active. The main means of engagement, as with the Aalborg+10 network, is through virtual interaction and concerns policy learning. Therefore, as with the Aalborg+10 network its analysis concerns Type II CTCC. Analysis of this network draws attention to the importance of a number of channels through which policy learning can take place. Members receive monthly updates through an e-mailed newsletter of updates on activities in Europe (e.g. through reading about case studies, and information on funding streams and policies). Furthermore, the financial resources provided by local authority membership in the network, supports practitioners of participating local authorities to attend conferences. For example, a colleague of the Senior Environmental Policy Officer of Aberdeen City Council identified a conference that he would like to attend on EU legislation and river catchment areas. He attended this on behalf of the consortium and then he wrote a report on his visit and disseminated the findings via e-mail to the other ESEC members (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council). This shows the value of developing tacit knowledge through face-to-face engagement, and is a cost effective way of using financial resources to disseminate information more widely.

However, whilst this demonstrates how an actor can draw on knowledge through tacit learning, and then transform this knowledge into an explicit mode of knowledge for the benefit of others, it is not clear if this is useful to all organizations in the network. As an example, it could be that an actor from another institution would have preferred to have drawn on tacit learning by personally attending the conference. Like Aberdeen City Council's involvement in the Aalborg+10 and ESEC networks, the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) - the third formal network examined – is Type II CTCC because participants are involved within this network on a voluntary basis, and they have relative autonomy to be as active or inactive as they choose - there is no legislation or conditional funding that forces local authorities to co-operate together. As with the Aalborg+10 and ESEC networks, the SSN illustrates the significance of virtual

interaction. Virtual interaction is valued because this is seen by practitioners as a more cost effective and less time consuming alternative to policy learning through face-to-face engagement. Membership of this network is free, and it primarily links all 32 Scottish local authorities together via: sustainable development information updates on the SSN website, e-mail links between the Sustainable Development (type) Officers that are based in each local authority, and through a free newsletter e-mailed to these actors collating all the relevant information relating to sustainable development in Scotland. E-mail contact has the advantage of allowing for quick and effective learning and potential knowledge transfer. This is because an SSN member can contact another for specific information and advice:

> E-mail works quite well as well because you quite often ask specific questions of somebody and get a lot of detail (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

This quote shows that actors can pursue e-mail enquiries for more in-depth tacit learning concerning a policy problem. To illustrate an example of explicit learning through virtual interaction, e-mail can be used to forward on documents to other actors. In further support of the argument as to the importance of virtual governance networks in policy learning, the SSN network is primarily of a virtual, informal nature. However, it is supplemented by more formal means of face-to-face interaction. The SSN has a steering group which has quarterly meetings on designated themes which all members can attend, and it rotates around the country. Additionally there is the opportunity for policy learning through a two day conference the SSN holds on a specific theme (e.g. sustainable development and the planning process; best value; community planning) every year. The attendance fee is approximately £120. This network employs two Project Officers to co-ordinate it that are funded by the Scottish Executive to keep the network active – it is unclear what would happen if the funding were to cease.

Three prominent findings emerge from this section. First, the importance of having a sufficient resource in place to stimulate action and to keep the network active, despite the financial and time resource problems in doing this. Kern and Bulkeley (2008) have noted the significance of a co-ordinator role for TMNs, which is clearly important to the Aalborg and ICLEI networks. It is also clear that a funded co-ordinator is essential to the working of domestic-based formal networks, as has been seen in the case of the SSN

and ESEC. Policy learning has generally involved local authorities drawing on knowledge from another authority, rather than the sharing of their own knowledge. This may be because the policy areas of analysis (climate change adaptation and community planning) are emerging policy areas of interest in relation to the policy guidance by central government (Chapter Three).

Second, the findings illustrate that virtual-based interaction is highly valued as a means of tacit and explicit policy learning. For example, addressing policy problems can be discussed on websites (tacit learning), the dissemination of policy up-dates by supra-national and national institutions (explicit learning), and the dissemination of case studies that highlight how local authorities have addressed a policy problem (explicit learning) can be sent by e-mail. However, e-mail exchange does not necessarily lead to policy learning, as this may just be information transfer. For example, receiving an e-mail about a funding opportunity is useful information to draw upon, but it does not mean that this knowledge is used to address a policy problem. Furthermore, the importance of virtual forms of interaction questions the assumption that trust needs necessarily to be built through face-to-face contact which is discussed extensively in the policy networks (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996) and governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) literature to be an important characteristic of governing through networks. The implications of this for policy learning are discussed in Section 5.2.3. The Aalborg+10, ESEC and Sustainable Scotland Network have highlighted the role of conferences as a useful yet minor means of engagement in tacit learning. This suggests that undertaking face-to-face interaction is important, albeit that this is not a common means of undertaking policy learning, despite the attention given to physical interaction in the policy networks and governance networks literature. Third, the blurring of the boundaries between formal and informal networks can occur – for example, interaction can take place outside the structure of the network. Furthermore this is necessary to enable policy learning to successfully take place – for example, the way that members of the SSN network use the formal structure to send informal e-mails to each other regarding policy problems. The next section explores the processes of PL/PT in informal networks and partnerships.

5.2.2 Policy Learning in Informal Networks/Partnerships

This section discusses the significance of learning and the nature of learning in informal networks and partnerships. Given the voluntary and autonomous nature of policy learning in the examples discussed in this section, attention is drawn to the role of Type II CTCC in the political landscape. There are two main approaches to undertaking policy learning in informal networks that are common to all four local authorities (although Peterborough City Council has used a third approach) in developing their respective climate change action plans or community strategies. This suggests that local authorities undertake similar policy learning processes irrespective of the policy area. The first approach is through explicit learning. Practitioners have read policy-related action plans, strategies, and documents at local, regional, and national levels. As the ESTAC consultant who has undertaken environmental work for Peterborough City Council notes, they looked 'at about 150 other documents' (Interview, 2006: ESTAC Consultant for Peterborough City Council). The Plymouth City Council case study shows how learning through explicit knowledge can take place through virtual forms of interaction – actors use the internet to draw on information/knowledge about the practices of other local authorities:

> Because I have been concerned about the Local Area Agreement processes in particular, I have been doing some internet searches. I have not been ringing people up, there is a lot of information you can get very easily. One of the tricks that I have learnt over the last few years is to decide what you want to find out and type in 'power point' after it. It's a fascinating thing to do because what you end up with is a presentation that other authorities have done, so you can put the authority name in if you like or the region . . . and you get the 'power points' they have been doing, explaining it to either themselves [internally] or other people [externally]. I haven't sold it to anyone yet, but you can pass it on if you like! (Interview, 2006: Education Co-ordinator, Plymouth LSP)[46].

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[46] As Chapter Three has shown, Local Area Agreements and a range of other development and regeneration initiatives should tie into overarching scheme of the SCS.

The above quote draws attention to the autonomy of CTCC because where policy learning takes place through virtual interaction, local authorities are not dependent on an external meta-governor (e.g. the state) to direct and control the policy learning that takes place.

The second approach to policy learning is that actors follow up internet searches (approach one) with informal discussions and enquiries through telephone calls or e-mails to other local authorities. As the quotes taken from the Peterborough and Plymouth City Councils show, the purpose is to develop more detailed knowledge on the nature of their query, which can lead to policy learning:

> I think for a lot of the time, like when we are working on our Core Strategy, we look around; it really is as simple as going on 'Google' or 'hearsay' and finding out which authorities have done things. Looking at a range of them, seeing what is good about one and ringing up someone from those organizations ... and likewise we have people that ring us and ask us about some of the documents that we produce. Sometimes it's people at opposite ends of the country really (Interview, 2006: Strategic Planning, Peterborough City Council).

Relationships with other cities are generally informal. I would say very few correspondents would be on a formal basis . . . you are constantly e-mailing each other about different things (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

What you do is to use your professional expertise, to sort of say 'well, actually, all I really need is your documents, or can I come and see you' . . . this informal contact can be someone at another local authority over the phone simply saying 'I will send you some documents, or say have a look at this website' (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council).

The last quote has shown how actors may also feel the need to follow-up virtual forms of enquiry with face-to-face meetings. Thus, as an example of Type II CTCC, the last quote draws to attention how practitioners have the capacity to make decisions about

whether they undertake policy learning through virtual and/or face-to-face means; and that they make value judgments on whether the development of explicit and/or the development of tacit knowledge will suffice, free from intervention by the state.

The third approach, found only in Peterborough City Council, is to supplement virtual learning (approaches one and two) with face-to-face engagement through the use of a presentation/seminar. The Climate Change Officer based at Cambridge County Council was invited by a consultant from ESTAC who was working to address climate change with Peterborough City Council (Section 3.4.2) to give a presentation to them on how to develop a Climate Change Action Plan. Local councillors and Policy Officers of Peterborough City Council's Environmental and Planning Department attended the presentation. The request for a presentation highlights the significance that is given to policy learning through face-to-face interaction by the consultant from ESTAC who had the responsibility of developing Peterborough City Council's Climate Change Action Plan. The Cambridge County Council Climate Change Officer co-ordinated the Peterborough-Cambridge Climate Change Partnership. This is the main way that the city and county local authorities and neighbouring district authorities were linked in relation to climate change work – albeit that there is not much ongoing activity within it at the moment (Section 6.2.4). Nevertheless, the Peterborough-Cambridge partnership has allowed a channel of communication between the councils to grow and is an avenue though which policy learning has taken place:

> As far as I am aware they do not have any single climate change resource in Peterborough . . . and I went and talked to a group of members there a while ago who are looking to put together their climate change strategy. And I talked to them about climate change and talked to them about the issues, about the process of producing our strategy. They were mainly city councillors, an environment related member group. I was approached by X at ESTAC who is doing some work for Peterborough City Council (Interview, 2006: Climate Change Officer, Cambridge County Council).

The Peterborough-Cambridge partnership shows how through Type II CTCC practitioners have 'power to'. That is 'power to' secure outcomes, generated by the mobilization and deployment of resources (Allen 2003, p. 47; Dowding, 1996; Johnston

et al., 2000). Through financial resources, skills, information, and contacts, local authorities have the power to engage in voluntary forms of PL/PT as they have the capacity to exchange knowledge for the potential of more effective policy-making. They have the resources to develop tacit knowledge for policy learning through face-to-face meetings. Furthermore, the Peterborough-Cambridge partnership example draws attention to the significance of double loop learning in Type II CTCC. Practitioners in Peterborough City Council have drawn on knowledge about both the policy processes and policy outcomes in the development and implementation of Climate Change Action Plans, through the meeting.

In summary, PL/PT involves stages. This starts off as informal, explicit and virtual, but can progress to one that is more formal, tacit, and physical if more comprehensive forms of learning are required. This can also depend on the category of policy transfer – for example, whether it is policies, programmes, or negative lessons that are being transferred (Table 5.1). For example, in the case of Peterborough City Council, the actors decided that to get to grips with the policy processes involved in implementing a Climate Change Action Plan, face-to face engagement and tacit learning with an actor from Cambridge County Council were required. This suggests that explicit and tacit learning through virtual governance networks is not always considered to suffice (Chapter Six). This ties in with debates in the literature about the role of trust in the emergence and maintenance of governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a) (Section 2.2). The implications for policy learning through formal and informal networks which includes discussions about the use of virtual networks are discussed in the next section.

5.2.3 The Implications for Policy Learning through Formal and Informal Networks

In both the formal and informal networks discussed here, virtual governance networks are a common medium through which policy learning takes place. This has five implications for the quality of policy learning, and for how governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) are conceptualized. First, the most obvious way that

policy learning takes place is through virtual governance networks and partnerships. This involves both explicit and tacit policy learning.

Where policy learning takes place through virtual interaction, actors are placing their trust in a document/website material/e-mails and telephone exchanges. This undermines conceptual understandings as to the importance of trust in the development of inter-personal relationships which is seen by governance network scholars as the 'glue' that holds actors within networks together (Borzel, 1998; Jessop, 2003; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner et al., 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Sections 2.1.3 and 2.2). Thus, over time there may be threats to the fabric on which local authority networks and partnerships are constructed, based in this instance on the increasing reliance on policy learning through virtual governance networks. In turn, this can leave the networks and partnership vulnerable to failings (Chapter Six). However, as Helling et al, (2005), usefully note, virtual technologies have the potential to facilitate effective communication and relationships between actors, through for example, the use of video-conferencing:

> The future potential of virtual networks in the environmental sector is directly influenced by the technological progress of information technology. For example, if internet-based video-conferencing becomes a standard-tool for virtual communication, the communication in virtual networks will be easier and more successful (Helling et al., 2005 p. 335).

Second, it may be difficult to verify the quality of the facts that are drawn upon through virtual policy learning. This suggests that actors may not be too concerned as to the verifiability of the source of information. Furthermore, these actors may not obtain sufficient learning from some of the virtual-based evidence. As an example, many practitioners drawing on documents that are placed onto websites for policy learning do not allow for all the processes of policy implementation to be necessarily captured. The quality of learning that can allow for more effective policy-making and service delivery may be compromised if incomplete policy transfer takes place (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000) (Section 5.1.1).

Third, the extent to which policy learning is taking place is debatable – interaction between local authorities may be more about information and knowledge gathering rather than specific policy learning. This raises questions about what makes knowledge transfer and policy learning a process of governing. Chapter Two (e.g. Section 2.3, and Table 2.1) has discussed some changes in governing practices from hierarchy to networks, and the role of PL/PT within this. The arguments discussed are that policy learning is a process of governing where policies, programmes, or negative lessons are transferred and used in the development of local policies, policy-making, and policy delivery. However, this does not necessarily mean that policy learning actually takes place, or that it leads to more effective outcomes. In other words, as a process policy learning may fail.

Fourth, the formal and informal networks discussed draw attention to the role of Type II CTCC in the political landscape. That is how local authority practitioners voluntary involve themselves in policy learning to inform their policy-making. Furthermore, local authorities rely on the knowledge and experience of other authorities to implement local policy-making. The formal and informal networks explored have drawn attention to the significance of informal interaction as a practice that enables policy learning and knowledge transfer in Type II CTCC. Local authorities have the autonomy and resource capacity to innovate policy-making in local contexts based on the knowledge 'out there' that local authorities have, rather than top-down by specialists under the direction of a meta-governor which is associated with Type I CTCC. The prominence of Type II CTCC in the formal and informal networks discussed, sheds light on the debates about the impact of meta-governance on networks (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, 2007b; Whitehead, 2003b) and the extent to which these have autonomy from the state (Sections 2.1.4 and 2.3). The examples have shown that within the context of voluntary policy learning practices, meta-governance through the European Commission and/or the state does not have a significant impact on the creation and facilitation of CTCC. Local authorities through governance networks have the autonomy to 'resist government steering, develop their own policies and mould their environments' (Rhodes, 1997, p. 52) (Section 2.2.1). For example, local authorities have the capacity to develop climate change action plans, which at the time of writing were not statutory.

Fifth, where policy learning between local authorities is taking place, this might be about: (1) drawing on information that is available 'out there' and that seems to work for another institution; (2) drawing on normative acceptable solutions to the policy problems of another institution (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). The main point to note is that where experiences and knowledge are being drawn upon by local authorities to use in PL/PT, the evidence presented so far suggests this has not been about the use of 'best practice'. Given the significance of best practice in the PL/PT literature, its role is explored in the next section.

5.3 The Role of Best Practice

Best practice 'relates to an initiative, policy measure, procedure or programme which is singled out as meeting (sometimes undefined) sustainability criteria' (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1029). The learning or drawing on best practice is one of the key conduits for PL/PT in CTCC. Despite the promotion of best practice in international and national policy documentation, and its recognised importance theoretically, there is a general absence of its conceptualization in the literature (Bulkeley, 2006). Thus, three points require clarification concerning the role of best practice: (1) The learning and sharing of best practice occurs through various mechanisms such as open days, workshops, site visits, staff exchanges, web-based materials and consultancy work (Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Stone, 2004; Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Radaelli, 2000). It is not clear however as to how such arrangements come about, the processes involved and the stages that bring the best practice into policy documents; this section informs these debates. (2) whether best practice does create more effective policy-making; and (3) how and by whom best practice is defined. The remainder of Section 5.2 is structured as follows. First, governing through best practice is situated within the PL/PT debates. Second, the rationale for drawing on best practice is discussed. Third, the practical problems that practitioners have in drawing upon best practice are considered.

5.3.1 Governing through Best Practice

The best practice literature highlights that there are three reasons as to why best practice is drawn upon. First, it is so as not to re-invent the wheel. Second, it is used in a problem solving capacity in the exchange of ideas and to promote policy learning (Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Brenner, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006; Coleman and Perl, 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Smith, 2003; Stone, 2004). Third, Bulkeley (2006) explains how best practice can be used in the production of new knowledge and how this shapes new understandings and shifting paradigms of the policy problem and influences the outcome:

> Best practice can be better understood as a discursive process, in which not only is new knowledge created about a policy problem, but the nature and interpretation of the policy problem itself are challenged and reframed (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1029).

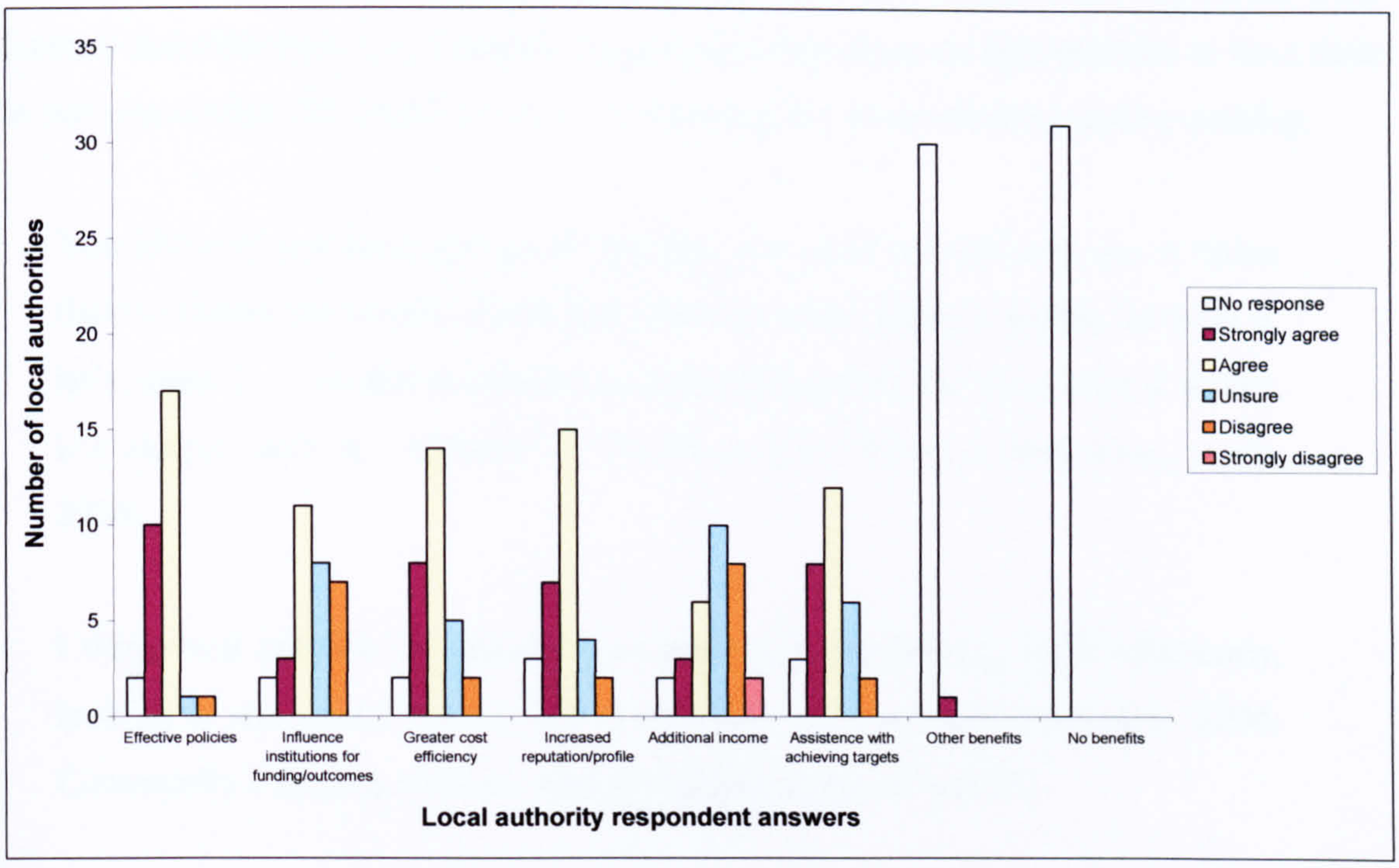
The first two reasons see policy learning as a rational process - drawing on best practice to understand how policy measures can be changed in light of new knowledge (single loop learning); and to understand how the policy goal and approaches to the policy problem can be changed in light of new knowledge that is produced (double loop learning) (Section 5.1.1). The third interpretation of best practice is also discussed in Section 5.1.1 and concerns an argumentative approach to policy learning. Practitioners, for example, do not take for granted that a policy or programme is an example of best practice, such as identified by the Audit Commission, that should be drawn upon. Rather, they question the policy problem which allows for new knowledge to be developed which can shape their understanding of this. The discussions in the remainder of this chapter highlight how practitioners have generally drawn upon best practice for the first two reasons referred to above, and therefore are concerned with single or double loop learning. Nevertheless, all interpretations of best practice concern the way that it is a key means of undertaking PL/PT as it can: (a) 'lead to changes in policy and practice in other urban areas' (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1032); (b) and/or allow for more effective policy-making and improved service delivery (increased performance) at the local level and (c) it is a means for practitioners to keep up with innovations. Thus,

best practice can be about mimetism – addressing uncertainty by imitating other institutions that are considered more successful (Radaelli, 2000). Within a CTCC context, best practice as a key means of undertaking PL/PT is traditionally associated with CTCC Type II - voluntary forms of engagement and the capacity to self-govern with limited influence of the meta-governor.

5.3.2 Best Practice Rationales

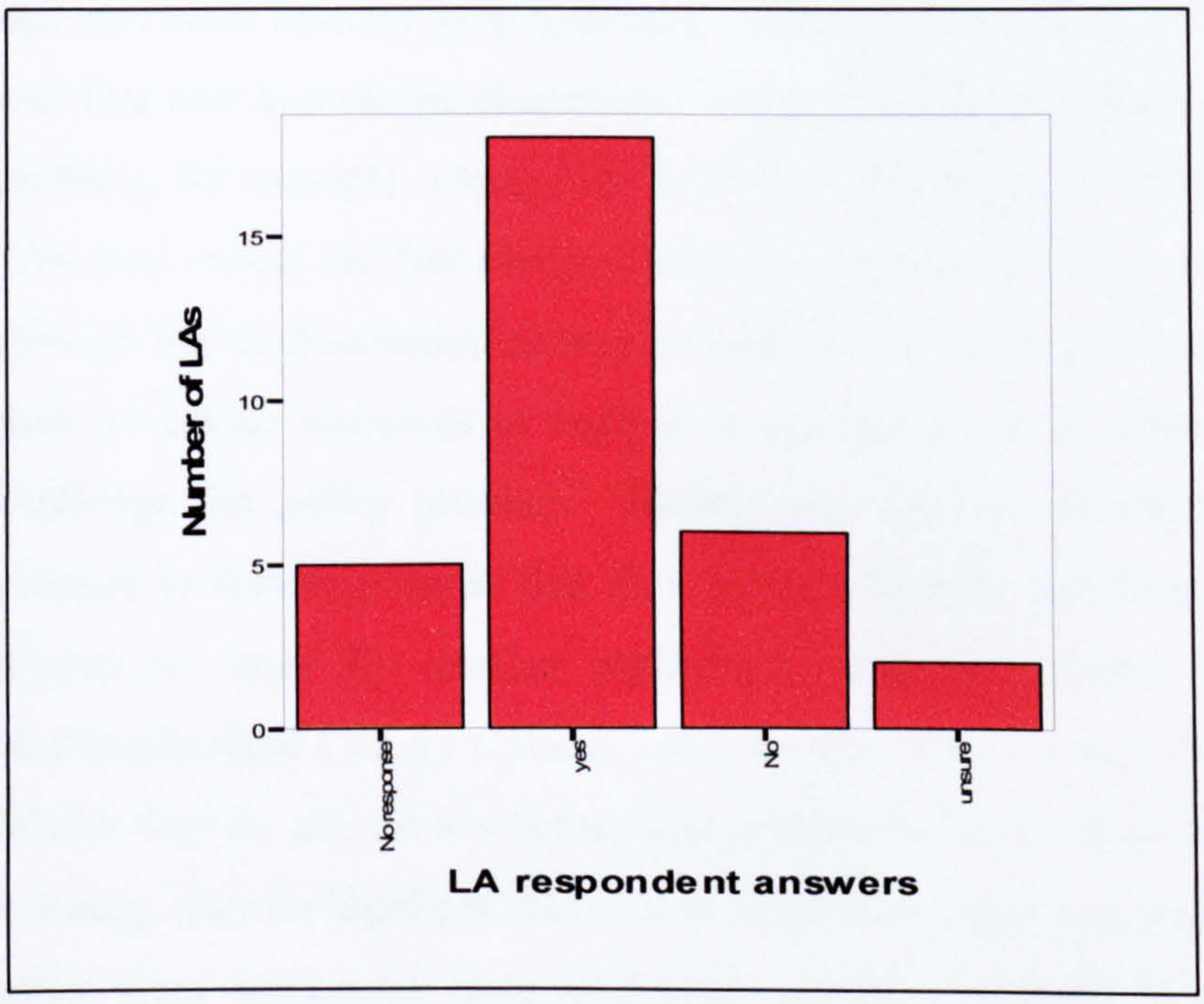
The empirical survey findings of this thesis (Figure 5.4) concur with the literature (Coleman and Perl, 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Galès, 2001; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Smith, 2003; Stone, 2004) that discusses the role of policy learning and self-organizational forms of governing that the most expected benefit of being involved in policy learning is to draw upon best practice for more effective policy-making at the local level. In combining the total of 'agreed' and 'strongly agreed' responses per variable, 27 of the 31 respondents support this. The next suggested benefits of drawing on best practice are to allow for both greater cost efficiency, and increased reputation/profile (22 respondents respectively). Interestingly, drawing on best practice to obtain additional income scores the least votes (9 respondents). The last point concurs with the findings in the preceding chapter (4.2.2) that CTCC engagement through structural funds and other financial incentives is not as prominent as it once was.

Figure 5.4 Expected Benefits from Co-operation



The empirical survey findings show that a high proportion of respondents (18 of 31) suggest the expected benefits do match the benefits obtained through being involved in policy learning (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5 Expected Benefits Match Actual Benefits



In support of the survey findings, practitioners and politicians from Plymouth City Council and Aberdeen City Council suggest that they draw on best practice to save time by not reinventing the wheel as a way of allowing for more effective policy-making:

> You know if you have got good practice, you may as well just use it rather than re-invent the wheel, and it just saves so much time, it works, let's do it, let's adapt it ... so that it reflects our priorities and at the same time it works. It's simple isn't it. (Leader of Plymouth City Council, Interview, April, 2006).

> I think best practice is important because to do something most efficiently, looking at successful ways is always the best way to work (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeenshire County Council).

Whilst the best practice literature and empirical findings emphasise that best practice takes place to avoid reinventing the wheel, this does not necessarily mean that the wheel exists in a local authority. Nevertheless, because the rationale as to the use of best practice is to save time by not unnecessarily repeating what others have done, practitioners are more likely to adopt this to change the policy measures used in addressing a policy problem (single loop learning) or to understand both the processes and outcomes (double loop learning). They are less likely to adopt best practice in a way that new knowledge shapes their understandings and shifting paradigms of a policy problem, for example, change the definition of a policy problem to introduce a wheel. This may reflect the fact that practitioners are under pressure from central government through the modernisation agenda to improve on policy delivery and may not have the time or labour resources to engage in discussions as to what best practice is, or to challenge the policy problem. Rather, practitioners are interested in adopting best practice to inform policies that they have to develop and deliver upon what has been proven to work by another authority. The two quotes below are taken from Northumberland County Council and Aberdeen City Council case studies respectively. Whilst they do not show whether best practice is drawn upon for single or double loop learning, they do highlight that practitioners draw upon best practice to understand how other local authorities have addressed a policy problem, rather than argumentative

approaches to policy learning. Furthermore, the role of virtual governance involving both explicit and tacit forms of learning cannot be ignored:

> I think working together can be about ringing somebody up and saying to them "tell me how you do it" ... and you just share ideas informally. Meetings are more formal, but best practice can be over the phone, or through email contacts, and sending e-mail to all local authorities in a region (Interview, 2006: Sustainable Development Policy Officer, Northeast Assembly).

> So we will often get emails from such and such a council that have done a bit of work on this, and asking 'how did you do it?', and you can just exchange best practice on a one-to-one basis in this way (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

An example taken from the Plymouth City Council case study illustrates how single loop learning is undertaken with regards to drawing upon best practice, and how this can involve informal, and virtual tacit and explicit policy learning. The Plymouth Senior Environmental Policy Officer was browsing the Local Government Association (LGA) website for examples of best practice relating to how local governance actors co-operate through LSPs. She observed that Durham County Council has produced a best practice guide document on this. This interested her because Plymouth City Council is similar to Durham County Council in terms of resource availability, and the size of the city, although Durham County Council is two-tier and not unitary like Plymouth. Furthermore, the Plymouth Officer was aware that the author of the document was a former colleague that she knew from the national LA 21 network that used to exist. She telephoned her former colleague based in Durham County Council to have an informal discussion about the operational decision-making processes within LSPs, and to develop greater policy learning about this:

> This phone call started an exchange of different documents that Plymouth needed, and that we were looking for. The documents e-mailed to us were copies of how Durham had introduced the issue of engaging in LSPs such as through a buddying (mentor) system, which is very similar to what Plymouth

was planning (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council).

The above quotes in this section have shown how practitioners consider the learning of best practice to be about drawing on parts of a model to suit a local situation and that is proven to work. Thus, given the flexibility in the autonomy as to the selection of the best practice and how it is drawn upon by practitioners, the examples provided are of Type II CTCC. Furthermore, the above quotes have also highlighted the fluidity of explicit and tacit forms of policy learning concerning a policy problem and the use of virtual governance networks. For example, policy learning to address a policy problem through the use of best practice can involve reading a document and discussions through telephone conversations. Thus, explicit and tacit knowledge can be learnt in one setting, in a fixed space, for example, in an office. That is, rather than explicit learning being associated with the reading of documents in an office, and tacit learning associated with attending conferences or field visits.

Despite the suggested importance in the policy learning literature (Bulkeley, 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Stone, 2004) as to the importance of best practice, there are two critiques. First, the evidence in the literature that drawing on best practice does allow for more effective local policy-making (Betsill and Bulkeley; Brenner, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Rashman and Hartley, 2000; Stone, 2001). Second, that best practice is always appropriate in local contexts is negligible (Betsill and Bulkeley; Brenner, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Rashman and Hartley, 2000; Stone, 2001) because it can hinder rather than enable local urban development. Implementing best practice in other localities can be problematic because best practice is rooted in local contexts (Brenner, 2004; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Stone, 2001). However, the counter-argument is that self-organisational networks (for example, CTCC Type II), should have the flexibility to adapt to changing conditions, and that practitioners within networks are more able to learn without external pressures imposing their will on what is required in local circumstances (e.g. Type I CTCC) (Benz and Furst, 2002). Nevertheless, the next section argues that because central government is an external pressure that imposes its will on local

circumstances, there are practical problems for practitioners in drawing upon best practice on a voluntary basis.

5.3.3 Best Practice in Practice

The modernisation agenda and its emphasis on statutory targets has encouraged partnership working within cities rather than co-operation between them (Chapter Four). However, an implication of the modernisation agenda for the use of best practice is that local authorities can choose to work alone to deliver policy on the ground, rather than be involved in exchanges with other authorities which need to be avoided due to financial and time resource constraints. Whilst this choice has always been available to local authorities, the increase in statutory targets that have to be addressed through the modernisation agenda puts a further strain on local authority demands. This highlights the control and power that central government has through its legislation over local policy-making, and its influence upon the governance spaces where governing through governance networks takes place. In short, as a strategic planner from the Peterborough City Council case study explains:

> With the huge pressures of turning these documents out, sometimes, I'm not saying it's right, it's easy to forget about that best practice and ... just think I have got to get this piece of work done, and get this document completed because we have got these targets and these deadlines ... and sometimes you know all the good work we all do in an ideal world is perhaps shunted to the side (Interview, 2006: Strategic Planner, Peterborough City Council).

The above quote highlights that working alone to deliver policy on the ground in a hurry is reducing the effectiveness of local policy-making because it actively discourages the use of best practice. This means that the use of best practice is not considered and can be ignored. Therefore, even though the previous section has highlighted that practitioners consider the use of best practice to be valuable, they have to make trade-off decisions by taking into account time and financial resources as to whether they use it or focus on delivering policy on the ground. A generic response by practitioners as to the use of best practice is that 'best practice is great but there is no time for it'. Perhaps

the most apt statement that summarizes the trade-off between best practice and delivering policy on the ground is the quote by a senior actor at the East of England's Development Agency (EEDA) taken from the Peterborough City Council case study:

> Local authorities are not paid to act as distributors of best practice: they have their statutory jobs to do, but they will be doing some very good things (Interview, 2006: EEDA senior actor).

The EEDA senior actor is suggesting that although some local authorities will have examples of good practice that they can share with other local authorities, they are not obliged to, and should not be doing this. He argues that there are other actors at a regional level that have a meta-governing role that should undertake this responsibility – for example, Regional Development Agencies (Chapter Six). Actually, and very significantly, the modernisation agenda incorporates the use of benchmarking activities between local authorities. Therefore, local authorities are actually being paid to act as distributors of best practice where they are recognised by the Audit Commission to be good at what they do. Furthermore, where a local authority is seen by the Audit Commission to be failing in its performance in a policy area, then it is required to look to the best practice of another authority in that policy area. Benchmarking, as a key means of PL/PT by local authorities is explored in the next section.

5.4. The Role of Benchmarking

Benchmarking within the UK is recognised as a key tool in the continuous improvement of local services. It can be used to demonstrate how well a local authority compares with alternative service providers in relation to identical/similar objectives, and how effective an organization is in meeting these (Bovaird and Löffler, 2002; Bowerman et al., 2001; De le Porte and Pochet, 2001; DETR, 1997; 1998; Hartley and Downe, 2007). The Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA) define benchmarking as:

> A method for councils to work out how well they are doing, by comparing their performance with other, similar councils, and with performance indicators[47].

Therefore, benchmarking is an activity that seeks to inspire improvements through competition with similar organizations – it serves as an instrument 'in the exercise of "shaming" and peer pressure' (Botcheva and Martin 2001, cited in Tews et al., 2003, p. 574). Overall, less attention has been given to the role of benchmarking as an important conduit of PL/PT in the literature that explores policy networks (Le Galès, 2001; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996), governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a), and policy learning (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Stone, 2004; Wolman and Page, 2002). Some of the scholars in the European literature have recognized the role of benchmarking activities (both process and outcome based) within the EU which is undertaken on a voluntary basis in governing. For example, Kern and Bulkeley (2008) note that TMNs use benchmarking as a strategy for internal governing. De le Porte and Pochet (2001) note that the Commission has encouraged benchmarking activities between actors within the EU to facilitate co-operation between nations, and it was first promoted during the Lisbon Summit (2000). Less has been said about the role of benchmarking within the UK in governing – although a significant difference between benchmarking through transnational co-operation and that undertaken in the UK domestic arena is that in the former it is of a voluntary nature, whereas in the latter case it can be either voluntary or mandatory. Mandatory and voluntary benchmarking as key governing processes of CTCC are explored in the following sections.

5.4.1 Governing through Mandatory Benchmarking

Bovaird and Loffler (2002) usefully identify 'outcome' and 'process-based' as the two main types of benchmarking that are used by local authorities. Outcome-based benchmarking is where an authority is benchmarked against another similar one that has excelled in a service provision in relation to league tables and results, which is monitored by the Audit Commission. Outcome-based benchmarking generally involves

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[47] http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=1089956 'Benchmarking' (accessed 17th March 2008).

the use of explicit knowledge and virtual interaction – for example, comparisons can be made by examining league tables available on the internet, publications, reports, and the Audit Commission website. As outcome based benchmarking may just involve comparisons between local authorities, it therefore may not lead to PL/PT. Process-based benchmarking usually involves a smaller number of local authorities and allows for an examination of the differences in results found through benchmarking clubs (DETR, 1998). Process-based benchmarking activities are more likely to lead to PL/PT than outcome-based benchmarking because policy learning is undertaken to improve in a policy area and to progress in the rankings of the league tables.

Process-based benchmarking involves tacit forms of policy learning (e.g. meetings, workshops, day visits) rather than explicit ones, and face-to-face interaction rather than virtual engagement. This is because more comprehensive forms of policy learning are purported to be required to improve upon local service delivery. Rashman and Hartley (2002), for example, in exploring the role of tacit knowledge promoted through workshops, suggest that the assumptions of the Beacon Councils Award Scheme is: 'continuous improvement can be promoted by encouraging local authorities to learn from the best practice of the selected Beacon councils' (Rashman and Hartley, 2002, p. 257). Furthermore, process-based benchmarking is also known as 'best practices for benchmarking' (Hinton et al., 2000, p. 52). This is because a local authority draws upon the recognised best practice of another in its learning to improve on its performance and results, and an authority has to demonstrate that it has taken up best practice as a means to improve its service delivery (Bovaird and Loffler, 2002; Bowerman et al., 2001; DETR, 1998). Therefore, process-based benchmarking can be regarded as a process of governing as its objective is to improve policy outcomes, and lead to learning outcomes.

Mandatory benchmarking relates to the role of Best Value within the modernisation agenda, and the Local Government Acts 1999 and 2000 in England and Wales, and Scotland Local Act 2003 (Section 4.1.3). Because mandatory benchmarking is a relatively recent phenomenon, this can explain why it may be an emerging key conduit of PL/PT within CTCC, and its general absence from the policy networks, governance network, and policy learning literature. De le Porte and Pochet (2001), Hartley and

Downe (2007), and Radaelli (2004) highlight that there is a need for further research into benchmarking activities as it is a recent concept that needs to be addressed.

Bowerman et al., (2001) usefully summarize four roles of benchmarking to help local authorities improve their service delivery under Best Value:

(a) Examples of good practice from other public institutions and the private sector in the UK and internationally can be identified.

(b) Services can be assessed to identify the best provider.

(c) Progress in making improvements against recognised leaders in the field can be monitored.

(d) Continuous improvements in central government policy-making and service delivery can be achieved.

The above four points can be classified into outcome and process-based benchmarking. Points (a) and (b) primarily relate to outcome benchmarking as they involve comparisons between service providers. Points (c) and (d) primarily relate to process-based benchmarking as they involve institutions undertaking policy learning by drawing on the use of best practice to improve upon service delivery. Because process-based benchmarking can allow for an examination of the processes of engagement between local authorities in undertaking policy learning, this is the main focus of this section. Furthermore, the Plymouth case study is drawn upon as this has predominantly highlighted the role of process-based benchmarking. This may be because the SCS as the policy area of analysis, closely ties in with the modernisation agenda, which means that these practices are more obvious. Two themes unfold. First, within the UK, mandatory process-based benchmarking is a significant driver of PL/PT (Hartley and Downe, 2007; Rashman and Radnor, 2005). However, there is scope for local authorities to choose which local authority partner within the benchmarking club they wish to learn from, meaning benchmarking involves both Type I and Type II CTCC. Second, in contrast to the main arguments presented in earlier sections, where the use of best practice relates to process-based benchmarking, then tacit learning, more formalized and physical forms of engagement take place rather than explicit, informal, and virtual ones.

The importance of a local authority learning through tacit knowledge from another that has an 'excellent' CPA rating as a standard of best practice to improve on its performance/league table positioning cannot be underestimated. This is illustrated through three examples. In the first example, the Performance Management Department of Plymouth City Council has undertaken process-based benchmarking activities with other unitary authorities with a similar LSP structure[48]. If a specific policy area/theme is identified that Plymouth City Council wants to learn more about, these local authorities can be contacted. In this instance the local authority contacted was Derby City Council:

> Another city that we are particularly interested in is Derby, for several reasons. One is that they are 'excellent', second demographically and physically they are not dissimilar in population size and those sorts of things to us. Thirdly, they are 'excellent' in terms of their ratings from the CPA, and also interestingly, they run their corporate management system as we do . . . and therefore some of their learning in terms of performance management has been useful to us (Interview 2006: Performance Manager, Plymouth City Council).

Plymouth City Council's Corporate Performance Project Manager had originally spoken with her opposite number in Derby City Council at a seminar that was organised by a performance management software company. Subsequently, the discussions resulted in actors from the Plymouth City Council Performance Department visiting Derby City Council to find out more about how they were using the software, and there was also a return visit. This example shows that central government has a hands-off approach to meta-governing as Plymouth City Council has had the autonomy to choose whom it closely benchmarks with. However, there is a strong role by central government in facilitating CTCC through the Local Government Acts and Best Value legislation that promotes benchmarking. Furthermore, this case study example illustrates that CTCC between local authorities is not always brokered by them – it can involve other actors such as the software company. This is an important point as the key drivers that have

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[48] Plymouth became a unitary authority about six years ago, and through their Corporate Resources Department they undertake process-based benchmarking against ten similar unitary local authorities.

been discussed in Chapter Four have not drawn attention to the role of the private sector in facilitating CTCC.

In the second example actors from the Plymouth City Council Planning Department undertook a day visit to Swindon Borough Council in May 2006. The day visit was essentially a meeting to compare notes on how both local authorities developed their respective Local Development Frameworks (LDF):

> Well we had a study visit to Swindon for example, about four or five months ago. Essentially it was a note comparing meeting really, how did they do it, what are the issues in that area, what are the processes, structures they are using. It was a benchmarking exercise (Interview, 2006: LDF Planner, Plymouth City Council).

Discussions took place concerning the important issues that need to be addressed in the development of both local authorities LDFs, the processes involved in this, and the structures they are both using concerning planning policy and planning delivery. The two main reasons for getting involved with Swindon Borough Council were that they had recently undergone a CPA inspection by the Audit Commission, and Plymouth City Council's was coming up, and both authorities are growth areas within the South West (Interview, 2006: LDF Planner, Plymouth City Council). In a similar vein to the former benchmarking example, the Plymouth City Council and Swindon Borough Council co-operation draws attention to the relative autonomy to choose whom local authorities work closely with, within the members of the benchmarking club. Furthermore, this illustrates how local authorities will mobilize their own financial, time, and labour resources to undertake face-to-face meetings and to develop tacit knowledge to draw on policy learning where they consider it to be important to improvement in their own policy-making.

In the third example, actors from the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) of Plymouth's LSP (LSP CDRP co-ordinator; LSP Manager; South West Government Office Policy Officer, police, and council representatives) undertook a field visit – arranged by the Department for 'Communities and Local Government'

(CLG) – to the London Borough of Lambeth[49]. This was to see how they addressed issues of crime, and more specifically how they developed and delivered on their Crime Reduction Action Plan – which is formerly known by central government as a Crime Floor Target Action Plan (FTAP). The Plymouth LSP was seen to be failing by the Audit Commission on theirs as they were not achieving their crime targets[50]:

> The morning was basically Lambeth saying 'this is where we are and this is how we got there, this is the process by which we have gone forward and these are the challenges at every step and this is where we have got to'. Then after lunch it was looking at Plymouth. Where we were, how we got there, and how we needed to take things forward in light of it. We were liaising with their LSP manager, their CDRP people, CDRP manger, the various analysts they had … it was useful, interesting, it was good (Interview, 2006: Plymouth LSP Safe and Strong Theme Co-ordinator).

The reason for Lambeth Borough Council being selected by CLG for Plymouth City Council to learn from is that they have done well in their CPA in achieving crime reduction targets, and they have undertaken similar processes to Plymouth City Council in terms of how the crime strategies come together under Local Area Agreements through funding initiatives such as the Stronger and Safer Communities, and Neighbourhood Renewal Funds (NRF) (Interview, 2006: LSP Safe and Strong Theme Co-ordinator, Plymouth City Council)[51]. West Cornwall and Bristol receive NRF and

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[49] CDRPs are statutory partnerships (Community Safety Partnerships in Wales) that have been introduced through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. For Plymouth, the Safe and Strong themed group of the LSP have taken on responsibility for this (Chapter Three). Statutory actors can work through LSPs to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder.

[50] LSPs have a statutory requirement to produce FTAPs where they are in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) (as Plymouth is) and are required to produce a Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. FTAPs link evidence to the achievement of Neighbourhood Renewal Floor Targets, and show how these targets can be achieved. Floor targets are identified by central government as a minimum standard of service as a means to narrow the gap in service between that local authority and the rest of the country within specific policy areas, for example, crime reduction. Chapter Six explores the role of hierarchy by central government in the use of its 'power over' to force Plymouth City Council to turn to the London Borough of Lambeth Council for advice, guidance, and policy learning on how to improve on their own Crime FTAP.

[51] NRF is made available to local authorities by CLG in the most deprived areas, and can be used to feed into the aims and objectives of the SCS. This money is non ring-fenced, and in agreement with them it can be used by local authorities and their partners in LSPs to improve services to narrow the gap between the deprived areas and the rest of the country (DETR, 2001; Johnson and Osborne, 2003; Taylor, 2007).

are geographically closer to Plymouth, but they are very different and at different stages of their programme to Plymouth. Therefore central government recognize that tacit forms of policy learning that takes place between local authorities further afield is worth the time and financial investment by themselves and local authorities. This example illustrates how benchmarking practices between local authorities can involve strong meta-governing control in the selection as to with whom local authorities co-operate. In this example, Plymouth City Council have been pushed into policy learning with Lambeth Borough Council. Thus, CLG have a more hands-on role meta-governing role in the facilitation of local authority co-operation.

Central government's promotion of benchmarking activities suggests that it considers policy learning between local authorities to be important in local governance. However, as with the broader debates about policy learning: 'benchmarking risks ignoring differences in the context of the organizations being compared' (De le Porte and Pochet, 2001, p. 2; Radaelli, 2004). Moreover, an important point to note concerning the role of best practice in general, and how it is used in processes-based benchmarking activities, is that poor or failed examples of lessons are often ignored, and the processes involved in policy learning can be complex (Bulkeley, 2006; Radaelli, 2004; Richardson, 2000). As Bulkeley explains:

> The creation and use of best practice as a means of reward and recognition for particular initiatives, individuals, and places means that only 'good news' stories are disseminated, and that the (sometimes) murky details of how practices were put into place are obscured (Bulkeley, 2006, p. 1041).

The fact that policy learning through drawing on best practice is not necessarily that straightforward may explain why the LSP safe co-ordinator has supplemented the field visit through further enquiries about Lambeth Borough Council's Crime FTAP. For example, he has subsequently held discussions over the telephone with Lambeth Borough Council as and when required, and has telephoned a number of people in various cities concerning the best way to take forward Plymouth's Crime FTAP.

Three points emerge from the three examples discussed that inform understandings about process-based benchmarking. First, CPA is a significant driver of process-based benchmarking exercises and the development of tacit knowledge. In all examples the

significance of day field visits is highlighted as a means to facilitate learning (Rashman and Hartley, 2002). Practitioners can develop a more tangible sense of how another local authority addresses its issues that is not possible through virtual and explicit forms of learning.

Second, learning from another local authority that has a grasp of the policy processes in a policy area is one of the most important reasons for process-based benchmarking activities, irrespective of whether the local authority is a City or a Borough. However, other relevant factors are taken into consideration by practitioners and the Audit Commission – for example, relating to similar size, set-up, and geographical location. This shows that in policy learning, consideration is given to the extent to which the best practice can be transferred into another similar local context. However, it is not clear from these examples the extent to which the use of best practice involves mimetism. Local authorities are not coping with uncertainty, for example, but rather looking to improve on their performance ratings and service delivery, with strong pressures to do so coming from central government. Third, mandatory benchmarking practices illustrate the power of central government as a facilitator and enabler of CTCC in the political landscape:

> Central government use compulsory benchmarking as a key tool for monitoring and controlling the 'modernisation' of the local government sector. At the same time, the latitude of the Best Value schemes has afforded local authorities the opportunity of developing their own benchmarking approaches (Bowerman et al., 2001, p. 327).

However, Bowerman et al., (2001) note that the compulsory nature has meant that benchmarking is more about defensiveness than innovation in local contexts. Furthermore, the power of central government highlights the power of the state and its power over orchestrating the fluidity between the types of CTCC. Whilst benchmarking clubs can allow for local authorities to be selective in choosing which local authorities they will have closer interaction with to undertake process-based benchmarking, central government can step-in and direct a local authority to look at another one of its choosing. This can border on hierarchy, whereby central government actually intervene to control the policy learning governing processes between local authorities, and is discussed further in Chapter Six (Section 6.1.1).

5.4.2 Voluntary Processes of Benchmarking

A difference between mandatory and voluntary process-based benchmarking is that whereas the former is driven by top-down drivers such as legislation, the later is generally undertaken on the basis of bottom-up initiatives. An example of this is the response by local authorities to develop new knowledge to keep up with innovation and to address the legislation. This is so that the authorities do not fall down in the league tables and their performance ratings by the Audit Commission. Furthermore, process-based benchmarking undertaken on a voluntary basis involves virtual interaction, tacit and explicit learning, and informal interaction, rather than face-to-face engagement, tacit learning, and formal interaction. Analyses of all the examples discussed below involve Type II CTCC. This is because of the voluntary nature of interaction in each example, and because local authorities not only mobilize their own resources to undertake policy learning but also choose which authorities they want to benchmark against. Furthermore, within the domestic arena, given the voluntary nature of interaction, local authorities can select any authority to benchmark against, irrespective of any formal ties to benchmarking clubs.

The only example from the case studies as an example of international benchmarking within this context is the involvement of Aberdeen City Council in the Aalborg+10 network as a means to address sustainable development in relation to Best Value. Two main reasons are identified as to why benchmarking on a voluntary basis is not that prominent across the four case studies internationally. The first concerns the relevance of the EU as a centre for learning for UK-based local authorities because of a number of complications. Aberdeen City Council draws on its own problems relating to the Aalborg+10 network to highlight that it is difficult to benchmark your local authority (style) with others in Europe because there are so many different approaches to sustainable development, and there are different governance systems (i.e. Federal states, and governments). Furthermore, signatory local authorities should submit reports on how they have met each of the Aalborg commitments to the Aalborg secretariat that is made available on the Aalborg+10 website for other authorities to learn from. The problem is that 'some of the reports are in the national language of the local authority that has produced them' (Interview, 2006: Sustainability Co-ordinator, Aberdeen City

Council). The problems of language as a barrier to TMN networks/networking is well versed in the literature (Bennington and Harvey, 1998).

The second reason involves the difficulty in mobilizing resources to allow for voluntary benchmarking to take place. Aberdeen City Council has had problems in submitting their yearly commitment reports to the Aalborg+10 secretariat because of resource constraints:

> You are meant to report annually, I don't know how many of us actually have to be honest with you because to get our base-line we have been working on it since April [2006], and we are a year late, but we just did not have the resources to do it (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

As discussed in Section 5.1, although Aalborg+10 is a European network, practitioners that attended the UK workshop on the Aalborg commitments suggested that they prefer a UK-based Aalborg network, rather than a European one, and a virtual network rather than a physical one.

Within the domestic arena, examples of voluntary forms of benchmarking activities as a response by local authorities to keep up with innovation and to address the legislation, can be seen through four examples taken from Aberdeen City Council (three) and Plymouth City Council (one) case studies. Interestingly, the role of benchmarking in addressing climate change adaptation was not an issue that arose in the empirical findings. This might be because at the time of writing it was not seen as something that has to be statutorily addressed, and therefore comparisons on progress with other authorities are not that important (Section 4.4.2).

In the first example, Community Planning Officers for each of the local authorities across Scotland have joined a Community Planning network on a voluntary basis. This network was set-up by COSLA, the Scottish equivalent of the LGA (Chapter Four), and the Scottish Executive, in response to the Scotland Local Government Act 2003 that is driving Best Value. The Network meets quarterly and its remit includes information-sharing to facilitate improvements to local services through the use of best practice (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeenshire County Council). The

Community Planning Officer from Aberdeenshire County Council explains the role of virtual interaction and informality as a means to keep the network active in between the formal meetings that take place:

> I am going to one on behalf of X of our authority in a couple of week's time, and there are lots of speakers and it's more like a seminar actually. Obviously they have informal e-mail contact and they are able to benchmark with each other on what each other are doing, and where everyone is at, and where people are dealing with certain issues. I think they must rotate the venue this time it's in Dundee, they last about 10 till 3. This time we are looking at outcome agreements (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeenshire County Council).

This quote highlights how learning and sharing of knowledge do not have to be undertaken separately, they can both be discussed within the same learning setting, for example, through e-mail exchanges. Thus, whilst single and double loop learning may be undertaken, discussions concerning the policy problem may also lead to new knowledge being produced (i.e. the third interpretation of policy learning, Section 5.1).

The second example also illustrates how voluntary process-based benchmarking is undertaken to keep up with innovation, and is of a virtual nature. The Community Planning Officer from Aberdeenshire County Council explains how she undertook a small benchmarking exercise in 2004 prior to publishing their Community Plan. She contacted a number of Community Planning Managers in Scotland to develop knowledge about their progress with developing their Community Plans (outcome benchmarking), but also how they were developing them (process-based benchmarking):

> Basically I just picked other Scottish local authorities that were similar to Aberdeenshire and just picked up the phone and asked them lots of questions. We asked the other community planning partnerships about community engagement, how they operate their partnerships, what structures they have, and what kind of strategies tie in under their community planning partnership. I phoned them up on an ad-hoc basis and had lots of questions in front of me. Then I produced a report on that. The main findings were that most of the partnerships are all about the same stage. I think we were worried that we

were so far behind and everyone else had got their act together and were working really well together ... but everybody has the same challenges (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeenshire County Council).

The Aberdeen County Council Community Planning Council Officer selected local authorities that were of a similar size to themselves. The phone-based approach was seen as a way of tacit learning because specific questions were asked that allowed for knowledge to be drawn upon that could be used in the development of Aberdeen County Council's Community Plan. In the third example, when Best Value came in through the Scotland Local Government Act 2003, two groups of local authority housing networks in Scotland – one for the smaller local authorities, and one for the larger ones – merged into the Scottish Housing Best Value network[52]. From the merger, the Best Value network has expanded to 25 local authorities. A number of sub-groups have been set-up, for example, to address homelessness, migration, and Local Housing Strategies. The Lead Housing Strategy Officer for Aberdeen City Council explains why his local authority is involved in the latter sub-group:

We joined as there was uncertainty as to what Best Value was all about and what we were expected to do etc., and it was very much seen as a group where we could provide mutual support to one another through implementation of Best Value regime (Interview, 2006: Lead Housing Strategy Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

This example shows how local authorities can have the capabilities to mobilize their own resources to be involved in CTCC on a voluntary basis by creating and governing their own networks as a response to legislation. The fourth example illustrates the significance of learning to keep up-to-date with the emergence of recognised sustainability issues. At the time of writing the LDF planner of Plymouth City Council was in the process of setting up a benchmarking group for cities of similar size as a basis for comparison to Plymouth that have growth areas. He gives recognition to the importance of explicit forms of learning through the internet, and the role of physical engagement for tacit forms of learning. He explains how the benchmarking group will

[52] Both original networks had been set up by local authorities on a voluntary basis to address shared housing concerns as to how best to take forward Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT).

facilitate learning between authorities to address planning and development issues in a more systematic way:

> This will create a networking opportunity of similar kinds of places with similar kinds of agendas – workshops, study visits – it's a variety really. Probably not so much through e-mail actually, but looking at the web, web searches of work that others have done. The main purpose of co-operation is learning, probably fundamentally it's learning actually, because there is a lot to learn with the new planning system. It is also about identifying whether we can do things better, or do things in a different way. We certainly want to learn from best practice if some authorities have addressed particular issues that we are still grappling with and we would like to know how they have done it, some of those issues are sustainability issues, such as energy and flood risk (Interview, 2006: LD Planner, Plymouth City Council).

A clear difference between mandatory and voluntary benchmarking practices is that in the former, recognised best practice as identified by the Audit Commission is drawn upon. However, in the latter, authorities might follow those that have taken a lead in a policy area, for example, community planning. This does not mean that they are drawing on best practice, and therefore, transferring a policy that is of a reputable standard.

5.5 Conclusions

There are five conclusions in this chapter that concern conceptual and empirical understandings about policy learning. First, because of time and financial resource constraints and the focus on statutory targets by local authorities, where resources are mobilized by them for policy learning on a voluntary basis, through Type II CTCC, this is more likely to involve virtual forms of engagement (e.g. browsing of websites and on-line policy documents) than face-to-face engagement (e.g. meetings, workshops, conferences) associated with Type II CTCC. Furthermore, this chapter has drawn attention to the role of explicit policy learning through virtual interaction. The implications of this for the quality of learning, both transferred and implemented, have been discussed. For example, that it is difficult for actors to verify the quality of facts

drawn upon through policy learning, that actors may not be too concerned as to the verifiability of the source of information, and that practitioners may not obtain sufficient learning from virtual interaction.

Second, the findings have questioned the use of best practice as a key conduit of PL/PT as in Type II CTCC local authorities are more likely to draw on available knowledge 'out there' on the internet concerning the activities of other authorities. They do this without necessarily questioning the extent to which this is a recognised best practice, and this learning is undertaken informally. However, where Type I CTCC, mandatory process-based benchmarking takes place, then the use of best practice as identified by the Audit Commission is important; and learning takes place through formal processes of engagement. In such situations then, as the best practice literature notes, sub-national actors undertake policy learning by drawing on best practice to facilitate more effective policy-making and delivery (Brenner, 2004; Bulkeley, 2006; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Rashman and Hartley, 2002).

Third, the findings question the extent to which policy learning is undertaken on a voluntary basis in general and in accordance with innovation in local contexts. The emergence of voluntary and mandatory process-based benchmarking activities as a key conduit of PL/PT brings into question conceptual understandings that local authorities are proactively shaping local policy-making through innovation and in accordance with local needs and concerns. Mandatory benchmarking – Type I CTCC – is a response to addressing national objectives through CPA and Best Value. Thus, the role of meta-governance and hierarchy in influencing CTCC cannot be ignored (Chapter Six).

Fourth, mandatory process-based benchmarking practices involve more formalized processes, comprehensive interaction and tacit learning through day field visits and meetings. Whilst tacit learning does not have to be formalized or face-to-face, these comprehensive approaches and the value in policy learning by doing, are seen by central government and practitioners as important to improve service delivery and local governance where a local authority is failing in a policy area. Thus, the drivers of more active and in-depth forms of policy learning and local authority co-operation are coming from central government.

Fifth, governing through virtual governance networks means that practitioners can draw on policy learning to overcome financial and time resource constraints that physical interaction and travelling internationally and within the UK would bring. Thus, governing through virtual governance networks opens up the potential for policy learning internationally and across the nation to take place. However, this chapter has also cautioned that whilst virtual networks are widely used in knowledge transfer, this does not always lead to policy learning or make them a governing process of CTCC. For policy learning and governing to take place, single or double loop learning needs to be undertaken, that contributes to the development of local policy-making. Single and double loop learning are the key ways that policy learning takes place. Local authorities generally take for granted that a policy, programme, or negative lesson is an example of best practice and do not have the time or financial resources, nor consider it their role to question this. However: (1) the literature and empirical findings have not established whether PL/PT does actually lead to more effective policy-making, although learning is valued in local governance as a means to improve on local policy-making and delivery and (2) where an example of a best practice is unclear because of a recent change in a national policy context – for example, the wheel has not been invented - then local authorities have to improvise and do engage in discussions concerning the policy problem (third interpretation to policy learning, Section 5.3.1) – for example, in the case of the community planning network in Scotland (Section 5.3.2). This chapter has highlighted how there is a plurality of governance in the political landscape; for example, the influential role of central government. The next chapter examines the conceptual and practical implications of this for understanding the externalities and internalities that constrain and enable CTCC.

Chapter Six: Enabling and Constraining CTCC

Chapters Two, Four, and Five have highlighted that CTCC is only self-regulating to a certain extent, because hierarchy and meta-governance can restrict its autonomy as a self-organizational form of governance. Therefore, CTCC can involve: (1) governing through hierarchy; (2) external meta-governing by supranational, national, and regional actors upon the local authority networks and partnerships and (3) internal governing and steering from within the networks and partnerships by the local authorities themselves. As such, there are both external and internal aspects of governing that constrain and enable CTCC. The objective of this chapter is to inform these debates. Four key factors are drawn upon in the discussions below that are suggested to either constrain or enable governance to successfully take place through networks and partnerships that are applicable to both external and internal governing of networks. These are: the ability to mobilize resources, in particular financial ones; the need for a combination of physical and virtual interaction; the role of trust and inter-personal relationships and the need for a governing mix between hierarchy, external meta-governing of the networks/partnerships, and the governance networks/partnerships themselves. This chapter divides into three sections. First, the role of hierarchy and meta-governance as externalities that can create and facilitate governing within CTCC are discussed. They are explored within the context of hierarchy and meta-governance in shaping local authority autonomy, and the implications for constraining or enabling CTCC are discussed. Second, the internalities - the internal dynamics of networks are examined. Third, conclusions are drawn.

6.1 Externalities in the Creation of CTCC

Section 2.3 has argued how hierarchy should be understood within the context of traditional conceptions of governing – namely: top-down rules; sanctions; legislation; intervention, and mandatory participation in governing practices by sub-national actors. Furthermore, there is a clear central control of resources that are decentralized to local authority institutions (Chapter Two, Table 2.1). This section draws on the Plymouth City Council case study to illustrate how hierarchy by the nation state can be used to intervene in local government policy-making and policy delivery to create governance networks – links that are forged between local authority institutions - where local

authorities are seen by them to be failing to achieve national targets in a policy area. Central government, for example, creates links between local authorities to undertake benchmarking activities. This suggests that the nation state considers policy learning between local authorities to be important where an authority is failing in its service delivery. However, as the Plymouth City Council case study shows, hierarchy can go beyond the creation of networks to actively steer and control the governing within them. The empirical material of the thesis has had less to say about hierarchy and the role of the Scottish Executive upon Scottish local authorities, or indeed the Commission in the EU arena. Perhaps the main reason that hierarchy is not so prevalent in the Aberdeen case study is that the power of the Scottish Executive to intervene in local services is not as great as those of central government and its ability to intervene in the governing of local authorities in England and Wales:

> In England, local councils judged to be 'failing' can have all or some of their services removed and transferred to private contractors or non-profit bodies, and these powers have been used. Some powers have been taken which would allow the Scottish Executive to intervene in local education and social services, but they fall well short of those south of the border and are seen as available only in extreme circumstances (Keating, 2005, p. 171).

The point is that benchmarking reforms between local authorities are limited in Scotland as the Scottish Executive does not have the power to direct this. In the case of Aberdeen City Council, they have an interaction with the Scottish Executive but this is more about consultancy and discussions, rather than hierarchy concerning sanctions and direction. For example, Aberdeen City Council is clearly seen as an initiator for the guidance of the Scottish Executive in local housing strategies that local authorities are required to develop. The Housing Officer explains that the pilot meetings with the Scottish Executive were in 2001, the same year that the legislation came out to say that every local authority should have a Local Housing Strategy:

> We were asked by the Scottish Executive if we would be a pilot authority for the development of Local Housing Strategy guidance, and that meant us working with Scottish Homes trying to draw up what the guidance would look like for the development of our LHS and we also tested that guidance by producing a pilot Local Housing Strategy document. In drawing up the

> guidance there was not any to draw upon, that was the whole point of us. We have got a blank piece of paper about how to take it forward. And there was considerable debate with ourselves and the Scottish Executive and Scottish Homes on the guidance (Interview, 2006: Lead Housing Strategy Officer)[53].

The reason as to why the Aberdeen City Council case study is not drawn upon within the context of hierarchy has been discussed. The reasons as to why Northumberland County Council and Peterborough City Council have not been drawn upon are because examples of hierarchy in relation to climate change adaptation have not been highlighted. As Chapter Three has argued, some of the wording in Policy Planning Statements (PPSs) suggests that it is up to the discretion of the local authority as to whether they address climate change adaptation. The PPS One 'Delivering Sustainable Development', for example, suggests that local authorities 'should' consider climate change, rather than 'must'. Chapter Five has show some of the forms that CTCC can take when hierarchy is not present, and local authorities have relative autonomy to self-govern – for example, through Type II CTCC and informal virtual governance networks.

6.1.1 The Impact of the State – Direct Intervention and the Threat of Imposed Sanctions

The literature (Borzel, 1998; Jessop; 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Loffler, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) recognizes that local governance can fail (Section 2.2.2). However, it generally lacks empirical examples of this and the implications for CTCC of governance failure. This section seeks to inform these debates by understanding the forms of CTCC that emerge when local governance fails and, in particular, the role of the state in this process in two ways. First, the power that the state has through the resources that it holds to have the potential to govern local authorities through hierarchical power and 'intervention' is discussed. Whilst all four factors (resources; virtual and physical interaction; trust and 'rules of the game'; governance mix) that were mentioned at the start of this chapter are highlighted in this section, 'resources'

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[53] Scottish Homes is now called Communities Scotland (sections 6.2.2 and 6.3.3). It is a Scottish Government's housing and regeneration agency that works very closely with Aberdeen City Council through the Cities Alliance (equivalent to an English LSP, Chapter Three).

stands out as being significantly the most important as it translates into power (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992) (Section 2.3). Resources as knowledge, legislation, and money can be used to govern through hierarchy. Second, the significance that central government gives to tacit learning through face-to-face engagement as a necessity that Plymouth City Council needs to develop and draw upon to improve on its service delivery within a policy area is examined. The difference that is discussed here, compared to the role of the state as meta-governor discussed in Section 5.3, Chapter Five, is that in this chapter the ways that central government take direct control of the authority through direct intervention to forcefully create and govern CTCC are examined. This would be the difference between the categories of Type I CTCC and hierarchy as is outlined in Table 2.1 (Section 2.3).

One of the roles that central government have delegated to the Audit Commission (Chapter Five) is to strengthen accountability of local authority processes and outcomes. Bowerman et al., explains that:

> The Audit Commission has also been given the power to trigger 'intervention' in local services where an authority is perceived as failing whether to discharge its functions adequately or failing to meet its statutory obligations (Bowerman et al., 2001, p. 324).

In the case of Plymouth City Council, the Audit Commission have triggered 'intervention' because this authority was seen by them as failing to meet its statutory obligations through its Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) programme in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The Audit Commission's Report on Plymouth's Corporate Assessment, for example, highlights:

> Reducing crime and improving community safety is a priority for the Council, but the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) is not meeting its targets for reducing crime levels (Audit Commission, 2006, p. 22).

However, the actual power of intervention has not come from the Audit Commission; rather it has come from the central government's Communities and Local Government (CLG). As the central government paper on 'Modernising local government –

improving local services through Best Value' (DETR, 1998b) notes, a provisional principle of Best Value is that:

> There should be provision for intervention at the direction of the Secretary of State on the advice of the Audit Commission when an authority has failed to deliver Best Value (DETR, 1998b, p. 9).

In the case of Plymouth City Council, the power of intervention has been through the threat of financial sanctions. CLG have threatened Plymouth that they will withdraw Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) (Chapter Five) if they do not comply with their improvement plan to progress on their performance. Practitioners have explained that the local authority was failing to effectively use the NRF to deliver on its crime targets through its Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) under the CPA:

> The driver for Plymouth has been improving its CPA ... I think ... a year ago our LSP self assessed itself as red amber ... it did not have clarity around what its ambitions, priorities and targets really were ... it didn't manage and monitor its performance, it didn't have effective data to base-line where the city was in terms of the delivering on the NRF and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. Now since then last September [2005] we have been working extremely hard towards an improvement plan ... we have been allocated a resource from the National Neighbourhood Renewal Unit in the DCLG and he is working alongside our LSP to help it deliver its improvement plan (Interview, 2006: Performance Manager, Plymouth City Council)[54].

> A poor performer will not get NRF, they will have it taken away from them, so we have not had it taken away from us, so that kind of indicates there is a degree of confidence in what we have done and where we are going (Interview, 2006: Leader of Plymouth City Council).

> The things like the NRF money were not used well. Government Office have said that "if you don't get yourself sorted and you don't spend the money wisely then you won't get it. So there was a risk of not getting money for all

[54] As has been highlighted in Section 3.4.2, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is now called Communities and Local Government (CLG).

> the regeneration in the city that we need ... and so there were threats, things had to be done by the dates or else. It did focus people's minds, especially with the new chief exec (Interview, 2006: LSP co-ordinator for Education, Plymouth City Council).

The above quotes show that the state has the hierarchical power or 'power over' (see Dowding, 1996; Johnston, et al., 2000) to force a local authority to comply with its wishes, because it holds the resources. In short, the threat of the withdrawal of funds is enough to direct action. As Bowerman et al., (2001) and the evidence from the guidelines of the Community Strategy highlight:

> So long as central government remains the primary source of funding for services ... it is inevitable that the centre will retain overall responsibility for outcomes. (Bowerman et al., 2001).

> National government is a significant player at the local level, both because of the resources that it provides and because local government and other public bodies are often involved in delivering national priorities (DETR, 2000, p. 39).

Through the control of local authorities' financial resources, central government has the capability of establishing the 'rules of the game' within which local authorities function. Local authorities are forced to focus on national objectives and targets that do not necessarily reflect local governance concerns:

> You have to remember the government is ultimately the one who decides what our standards of spending assessments are, what we can spend on what. And they are also the ones that are auditing us to see how well we are doing. So basically they are the ones calling the shots and we have to find out what is expected of us, and its usually a good idea to go along the same lines as they are (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council).

We are having some difficulty with that at the moment – developing our own targets and objectives, and in a sense that's because against the background to this is a local authority that is emerging from a very poor CPA three years

> ago; and an LSP that is still amber red. Yeah we have local indicators, of course we do, and we want to negotiate some of those in because obviously like any other local authority or LSP the things we want in the Local Area Agreement are a reasonable chance of succeeding ... and we have local priorities as well as the national indicators and the national targets (Interview, 2006: Leader of Plymouth City Council)[55].

In summary, the autonomy of local authorities is reduced because their ability to mobilize their own resources is constrained and they have to focus on national targets. Interestingly, whilst it is the role of the state to intervene to prevent a local authority failing, one has to question if the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) proposals really do 'have the potential to bring about one of the most significant shifts in the governance of local areas in any state in Western Europe' (Raco et al., 2006, p. 477). Raco et al., (2006) explains that conceptually, the development and implementation of the strategy is down to the responsibility of the local governance actors with less intervention and influence by the state. Thus, local authorities and their governance partners have the autonomy and flexibility to address local needs and concerns through them. However, as has been established, NRF objectives and targets feed into the SCS, which means that there can be central government objectives that have to be addressed within them. As it happens, Raco et al.'s, (2006) empirical findings suggest that sub-national actors have to consider a number of national targets in their respective strategies which shows that central government clearly has a strong controlling influence over local governance.

The second fundamental point is how the state, through direct intervention and involvement, can 'row' a local authority to improve on its performance in a policy area, by actively involving itself in the local authority's policy-making and policy delivery. As the central government paper on 'Modernising local government – improving local services through Best Value' (DETR, 1998b) notes, a provisional principle of Best Value is that 'the form of intervention should be appropriate to the nature of failure'

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[55] A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a partnership between the local authority and private sector and voluntary actors through LSPs in a three year (renewable) contract with central government (via the Government Office of the Region) (Chapter Three).

(DETR, 1998b, p. 9). The paper goes on to suggest the different types of intervention that can take place:

> In cases of management failure, intervention might most usefully take the form of a requirement for an authority to accept external management help through advice or appointment, relating to specific services or to the core management of the council. In the last resort intervention might, however, lead to responsibilities being transferred to another authority or third party charged with carrying out the work on behalf of the failing authority, possibly for a specified period (DETR, 1998b, p. 32).

Part of the recovery plan for Plymouth's NRF programme involves CLG drafting in its own personnel to lead the local authority through its recovery. For example, in 2005, CLG appointed an NRF advisor – a consultant that works for the National Neighbourhood Renewal Unit of CLG – with the task of steering the CDRP of the Plymouth LSP through their NRF programme:

> The city council was a failing authority so basically if they did not change then they would not get continued funding. X from the National Neighbourhood Renewal Unit was flown in basically to wave the stick at them and say you have to do it this way or you are going to be failing again, and then they would have lost a significant amount of neighbourhood funding, so they have had to adapt (Interview, 2006, Plymouth Community Partnership Assistant Director).

> The authority has been subject to almost intervention, it is an improving authority and it has been through difficult times. There has been a very strong steer from Government Office South West and from DCLG (Interview, 2006: LSP co-ordinator for Education).

The emphasis by the NRF advisor is on interaction that is generally of a face-to-face nature. He visits Plymouth at least on a monthly basis and holds meetings/discussions either separately or collectively, as and when required, with a range of regional and local actors that are involved with Plymouth City Council. For example, the NRF advisor works closely with the regional South West Government Office (SWGO) to

make sure that Plymouth sticks to its reform programme. Furthermore, he liaises with the various team leads of the LSP and makes suggestions as to the way to take things forward. One of the ways that he has done this is through providing Plymouth with an example of where another local authority, in this case London Borough of Lambeth (Section 5.3.1), has undertaken its NRF programme particularly well under the Comprehensive CPA for their CDRP. In other words, he has used the power of hierarchy to produce CTCC. In short, one aspect of intervention is the option to use this as a means to create CTCC. More specifically, the NRF manager has mobilized resources to create links between institutions and actors to forge networks for policy learning as a governance process of CTCC:

> The assignment manager is basically an external consultant who comes down as and when required, but at least on a monthly basis, and comes down and consults, and talks to the various team leads and makes suggestions as to the way to take things forward. In my discussion with him, he suggested it would be helpful to go to Lambeth and look at how they deal with things up there. It was actually about the Crime Floor Target Action Plan, but it was also about, giving us an opportunity to network with people at that level (Interview, 2006: LSP safe and strong theme co-ordinator).
>
> To tap into other networks you will get recommendations. For example X is our neighbourhood renewal adviser. As we have problems reaching our crime targets, X says we'll talk to so and so (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council).

The NRF advisor is using process-based bench-marking (Section 5.3.1) to monitor progress in Plymouth's improvements against Lambeth (a leader in the field) – to 'bring about continuous improvements in central government policy making and service delivery' (Bowerman et al., 2001, p. 322). In this process, links between local authorities are forged. The NRF advisor organized a comprehensive day field visit to Lambeth for the key actors involved in Plymouth's CDRP (i.e. LSP CDRP co-ordinator; LSP manager; police, and council representatives; SWGO Officer) to see how Lambeth approached and undertook their Crime Floor Target Action Plan.

Four main findings emerge concerning the role of hierarchy. First, to prevent local government failure, hierarchical governance can be required to overcome this through direct intervention. Meta-governance that is prevalent in Type I CTCC can be necessary but not sufficient to achieve all governance objectives. Furthermore, checks and balances of local authority's performance and achievement of governance outcomes can be achieved through the role of hierarchy (Dowding, 1996; Johnston et al., 2000). Second, where a local authority is seen to be failing by CLG, it directly intervenes and creates structures of CTCC through links between local authority institutions. Thus, CTCC is not only created by the state, but is seen by the state to be a means to overcome governance failure as it can create learning outcomes to address policy failure. Many of the barriers to voluntary forms of CTCC that have been referred to in Chapter Five such as time and financial constraints, are overcome by the state's use of its hierarchical powers to allow for CTCC to take place. This is because CTCC is prioritized as something that is important and necessary to improve upon performance. The potential loss of NRF does not outweigh the cost effective benefits of not acting to improve upon performance.

The irony is that hierarchical governance is based on problem solving of expertise rather than local experience (Scharpf, 1997) – for example, the NRF advisor has physically come into Plymouth City Council and directed them through their NRF programme. However, the Plymouth example shows that central government actually values the local experiences of local authorities. This can also be seen in the promotion by central government of the Beacon Scheme Award (Rashman et al., 2005). Therefore, whilst hierarchy on the surface seems to undermine the capabilities of local authorities, they still have some capacity to self-steer to greater or lesser extents as they engage in horizontal forms of co-operation – albeit this might be more of a mandatory nature (Type I CTCC) than a voluntary one (Type II CTCC). Third, significantly, face-to-face interaction through both vertical and horizontal linkages in the inter-play within and between networks and hierarchy is essential to allow for governance through networks to be accomplished. Fourth, the recognition of drawing on local experiences and top-down experience to achieve learning outcomes through a 'governance mix' cannot be ignored. Chapters Two and Five have drawn attention to the importance of meta-governance in facilitating CTCC. Less has been said about the role of regional governance, and the implications for governing through CTCC when this fails, for

example, when it does not have the power that the state has to implement hierarchy. This is explored in the next section.

6.1.2 The Role of Meta-Governance

Scholars that study self-organizational networks explain that as networks involve a complex interaction of stakeholders there is a need for meta-governance as a means of co-ordination to 'avoid governance failure and the rise of private interest government that escapes public scrutiny' (Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, p. 1) (Chapter Two). Nevertheless, Chapter Two has highlighted that meta-governance can fail. The governance literature recognises that the governance spaces within which CTCC governs can be an arena of conflict, competition and tensions. This is because sub-national actors may have their own ideas about how to govern and achieve governance, and they may have contrasting objectives to that of the meta-governor, for example, the policy objectives of a central government department. As such, there can be difficulties in regulating the complexities of networks and actors, and meta-governance can weaken the horizontal co-ordination and co-operation that networks governance is based upon (Jessop, 2002, 2004a; Rhodes, 2007; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, 2007b). The development of inter-personal relationships and trust is seen by some governance networks scholars as being the 'glue' of horizontal co-ordination that holds actors within networks together, and allows for successful co-operation between actors to take place (Jessop, 2003; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Section 2.1.4). Meta-governance can fail because the actor or institution that undertakes the meta-governing steering role can weaken the 'glue' that holds actors within networks together. The governance literature (Jessop, 2002; Kelly, 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a, 2007b) on meta-governance is generally absent of substantive material as to why it fails or has failings, and what happens when this occurs. The objective of this section is to inform the debates on the failings and failure of meta-governance. One way to understand this is to draw on the work of Jessop (2003) who notes that at a generic level there are two types of governance failure, which in turn is used to examine meta-governance failure in this and subsequent sections:

> There are at least two levels of failure – the failure of particular attempts at governance using a particular governance mechanism and the more general failure of a mode of governance (Jessop, 2003, p. 151).

The first level of governance failure concerns the processes of governing – for example, policy learning. The second level of failure would concern the failure of meta-governance as a mode of governance, for example, in the orchestration of markets, hierarchy and networks. So it might, for example, mean that the deployment of a hierarchical means of governing actually undermines another mode of governing (learning through networks) which the meta-governor is seeking to promote. The Northumberland County Council case study is drawn upon to explore the failings of regional governance. This concerns the first level of meta-governance in Jessop's (2003) categories above, as whilst there are failings from the local authority's perspective, it is not governance failure, but rather failings in the co-ordination and steering of the local authority network. The argument is that the conflict between regional targets of the Government Office for the North East (GONE) and local ones means that local priority concerns and objectives can be side-tracked and can cause frustration for local authority actors. The case study example below shows that successful working practices can be undermined when an actor within an institution can change the 'rules of the game' without negotiation with partners within the network. In turn, this can derail the accomplishment of governance through local authority networks. Furthermore, aside from the empirical findings that the focus on statutory targets by local authorities is drawing resources away from voluntary forms of CTCC (Chapter Five), the substantive material has had less to say about the failings of the nation state as a meta-governor. However, as will be seen below, the state has a prominent institutional role in the political landscape (Brenner, 2003).

The three key actors in each English region are the Regional Assembly, the Regional Government Offices, and the Regional Development Agencies[56]. These are the main players that have an impact on sustainable development in the region, and they work

[56] The set-up in Scotland is different as the main regional actors are different. For example, for the Aberdeen case study, the main actors of the Grampian region are: the police service; the fire service and Scottish Enterprise – a main economic development agency, funded by the Scottish Government. However, the evidence of link-up with these regional actors concerning sustainable development is limited. Rather, Aberdeen City Council is more likely to link-up with Communities Scotland (section 6.3.3).

together through the region's Sustainable Development Round Table (SDRT) to address regional problems and issues[57]. Jessop (1997; 1998), Jones and MacLeod (1999; 2004), MacLeod (2001), and Whitehead (2003b) highlight how political processes - the hollowing out (Rhodes, 1997) and changing nature of the state has allowed for the emergence of Regional Development Agencies and Regional Assemblies in the political landscape. However, for the most part their studies have focused on these regional institutions' relationship with the nation-state, and how the latter uses its power to steer the regional actor's aims and objectives through meta-governing principles. Haughton and Counsell (2004) have looked at the role of regional planning in the same vein. Less has been said about the meta-governing role of the key regional actors upon local authorities, the processes this involves, and the tensions within the governance spaces that this can bring. The purpose of this section is to inform these debates.

The case study example concerns the Sustainability Officers group in the North East, formerly known as the Local Agenda 21 (LA 21) group. The actor from the Government Office North East (GONE) notes that until recently, she used to co-ordinate this network. Provisionally, it was a quarterly meeting group, but 'not a lot has happened' since September 2005. The main reason for this is time constraints – the actors were voluntary members of this group. Given the voluntary nature of participation in the network, the Sustainability Officer's network is Type II CTCC. The GONE Officer suggests there are usually twenty-five local authority members from different local authorities that come to the meetings, which are arranged through an 'e-mail alert'. The initial purpose of the group was for local authorities to update other authorities as to what projects were undertaken, and for each of the local authorities to exchange information in the learning and sharing of ideas. Therefore, the network is an ideal meeting post, a physical governance space, for local authorities in specific policy areas (i.e. sustainability) to meet up, which was co-ordinated, steered, and created by GONE. Nevertheless, the GONE Officer notes that although it was useful for the local authorities to discuss amongst themselves how best to produce a climate change strategy, and to draw on each others experiences, this was not useful to her – as a

[57] The sustainable development round table is an independent voluntary body with no formal legal status, although its only statutory duty is to produce the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Figure 3.6, Chapter Three, provides a useful illustration as to how this set-up can work in a region.

regional actor, she wanted the network to have a more regional focus, with regional objectives:

> This was not particularly useful for us as we have to operate at a much more regional level, so I tried to change those meetings to give them a bit more focus through looking at impacts of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy on them (Interview, 2006: GONE Policy Officer).

However, the GONE actor notes that the change of focus deterred the interest and motivation of the individuals to attend meetings:

> The change of focus worked for some and not for others which is why there has been a bit of a lull in meetings but I am trying to work out how to re-structure these to keep the members interested (Interview, 2006: GONE Policy Officer).

Thus, the GONE Officer is trying to work out a means of re-structuring the meetings to regain local authority practitioners interest by re-defining common shared objectives for all members of the group. This is an illustration as to what happens to voluntary forms of CTCC in the challenges of meta-governing at a regional level – for example, trying to balance different ways of governing local authorities. The case study example highlights three implications for understanding Type II CTCC as a form of CTCC that is undertaken on a voluntary basis. First, the example demonstrates why it is important for there to be scope for all actors in the network to participate in establishing the 'rules of the game'. GONE had the power and capacity to change the 'rules of the game' which subsequently led to a breakdown of common shared interests and the functioning of the network. This has meant that some sub-national actors have lost interest to be actively involved in the network.

Second, the example shows that as the network governance literature (Kohler-Koch 2002; Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004) suggests, actors will voluntarily mobilize their own resources, for example, in the use of their time, to come together to address policy problems and find policy solutions if there are shared common objectives. As Marcussen and Torfing (2003) note, actors need to be able to establish their own rules to allow for successful co-operation to take place. However, Benz and Furst (2002)

suggest that there is the need for the role of the meta-governor to force ideas upon actors in networks and to force change if actors do not voluntarily undergo this. Nevertheless, the GONE Officer's story shows that in some cases where the meta-governor intervenes and tries to force change, more problems can occur than were otherwise apparent. Thus, whilst the changes have created instability within the network, this is not meta-governance failure because the network still exists and some local authority actors still attend the meetings. Rather, the Sustainability Officer's group network example illustrates that there can be failings in meta-governance – particularly where the meta-governor cannot enforce change or there is not a commitment to the network because actors are involved within this on a voluntary basis.

Third, it is debatable as to whether GONE as the regional actor, functions as an external (i.e. overseer of the network) or internal (i.e. member) meta-governor of this network. The critiques as to the political and financial autonomy of governance networks acquired through examining CTCC in this section brings into question whether networks and hierarchies are separate modes of governance. Nevertheless, one of the main conceptual arguments of this thesis is that governance networks should be seen as separate to hierarchical governance (Church and Reid, 1996; Leitner et al., 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1997). For example, it is shown in this section that whilst hierarchical governance structures do impact upon the governance spaces within which governance networks breathe and function, they still have some autonomy and capacity – i.e. through CTCC Type I and II - to undertake some steering capabilities. Furthermore, the GONE and Sustainability Officer example above has illustrated that there are two modes of MLG governing processes – MLG Type I and MLG Type II –taking place concurrently (Section 2.1.2). Scales are neatly nested in terms of distinct hierarchy and clarified roles and responsibilities (Type I) (Marks, 1993). For example, there is a clear distinction in hierarchy and the roles of the key regional institutions, and those of local governments. However, these processes are also tangled and moulded into each other as they become 'unstable' and 'contested' (Hooghe and Marks, 1996, p. 91). This is evident in the ways that GONE has become an extension of the Sustainability Officer's network, but has no power to govern the network should the actors within this disagree with the ways that the objectives of the network have been redefined. Therefore, governance spaces within which CTCC takes place are an arena of tensions which can compromise issues of trust and the

development of inter-personal relationships. As established, these factors are important as network governance scholars suggest they are the 'glue' that holds actors in self-organizational networks together. The purpose of the next section is to explore the 'glue' of networks further and to examine the internal dynamics and governance processes within governance networks, by local authority practitioners.

6.2 The Internal Dynamics of Networks and Partnerships

The purpose of this section is to provide insight into the significance of the role of actors and structure within networks and partnerships. The network governance literature has established that both the structure of networks and the individual actors are important for the success of policy networks (Coleman and Perl, 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Leitner et al, 2003; Marsh, 1998a, 1998b) (Section 2.2). As with policy networks, (analysis of) resources inter-dependencies are considered important to governance networks, but the emphasis is more on establishing the 'rules of the game' (Bulkeley, 2004; Jessop, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Scharpf, 1997) to deliver policy on the ground, as to what structures the network. This section examines the relevance of these ideas for understanding CTCC. To this end, three themes have provided insight into factors that variously constrain or enable successful governing practices within CTCC or have facilitated the creation of CTCC. First, the importance of working together to deliver policy on the ground is discussed. Second, the role of individual actors is examined. Third, the role of 'rules of the game' as an effective mechanism in shaping the network is explored. The main arguments for each theme are addressed in respective sections below. As with previous sections in this chapter, the importance of physical and virtual networks, factors of trust, resource constraints, and the governance mix, are interwoven into these themes.

6.2.1 Working Together

Two arguments are laid out in this section concerning factors that constrain or enable CTCC in actors working together. The first, concerns the role of resources. The empirical survey findings suggest that two of the main obstacles to CTCC are insufficient time (25 respondents) and budget constraints (23 respondents) (Section

5.1.1, Figure 5.3). The implications for CTCC where time and budgets are constrained, is two-fold: (1) face-to-face physical interaction which is required to facilitate project-working in the delivery of projects on the ground, can be reduced and (2) local authority engagement in project-based CTCC can be compromised – an example of local authority involvement in structural funds is discussed. The second argument is that informal and formal network structures can constrain or enable CTCC. Whether networks are informal or formal this section argues that face-to-face interaction to facilitate project-working is important.

In the first argument which is that governing through CTCC is affected because of time and budget constraints, the first implication for CTCC (across all three types) is that it can be reduced to virtual forms of governance networks. Thus, whilst virtual interaction is necessary, it is not sufficient in project-working between local authorities - in the delivery of projects on the ground. Chapter Five has highlighted how the most common way to be involved in the learning and sharing and dissemination of knowledge between authorities is through virtual informal forms of engagement as this is seen as the most quick and efficient method. However, the empirical survey findings in particular have shown the value that actors put on face-to-face interaction to allow for successful CTCC to take place. This is not just about the exchange of knowledge and policy learning as discussed in Chapter Five, but is also about where local authorities work together in the implementation of projects, which may or may not involve policy learning. As an example, city and district neighbouring local authorities work together to produce municipal waste management strategies. In other words, this section draws attention to the importance of face-to-face meetings to discuss agendas and the exchange of knowledge in project-working, rather than the benefits of face-to-face engagement specifically for policy learning. When combining the 'strongly agree' and 'agree' variables, practitioners consider both formal (27 respondents) and informal meetings (26 respondents) as very important factors that enable the success of CTCC (Figures 6.1 and 6.2).

Figure 6.1 Local Authority Respondents Rationale for the Success of CTCC

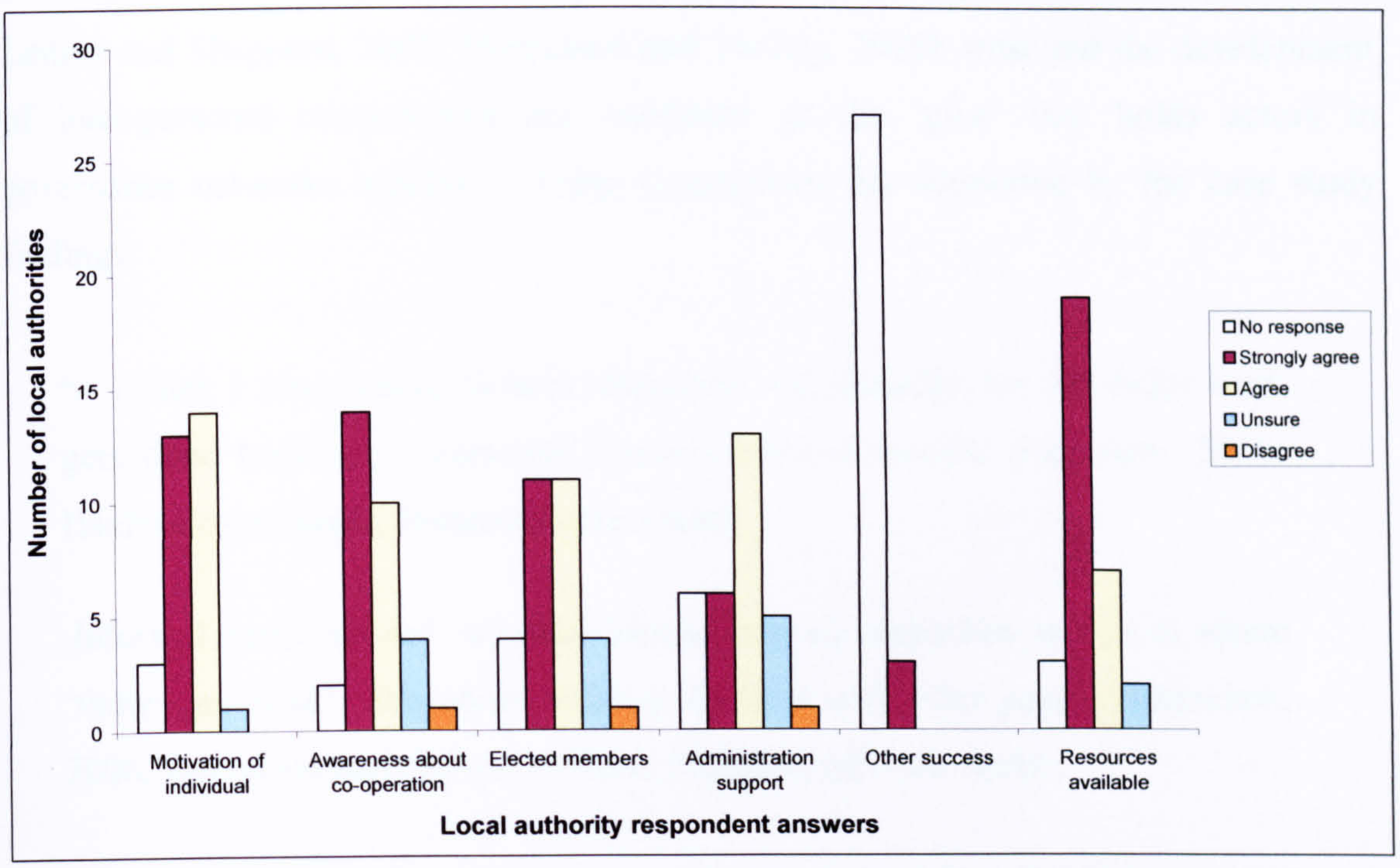
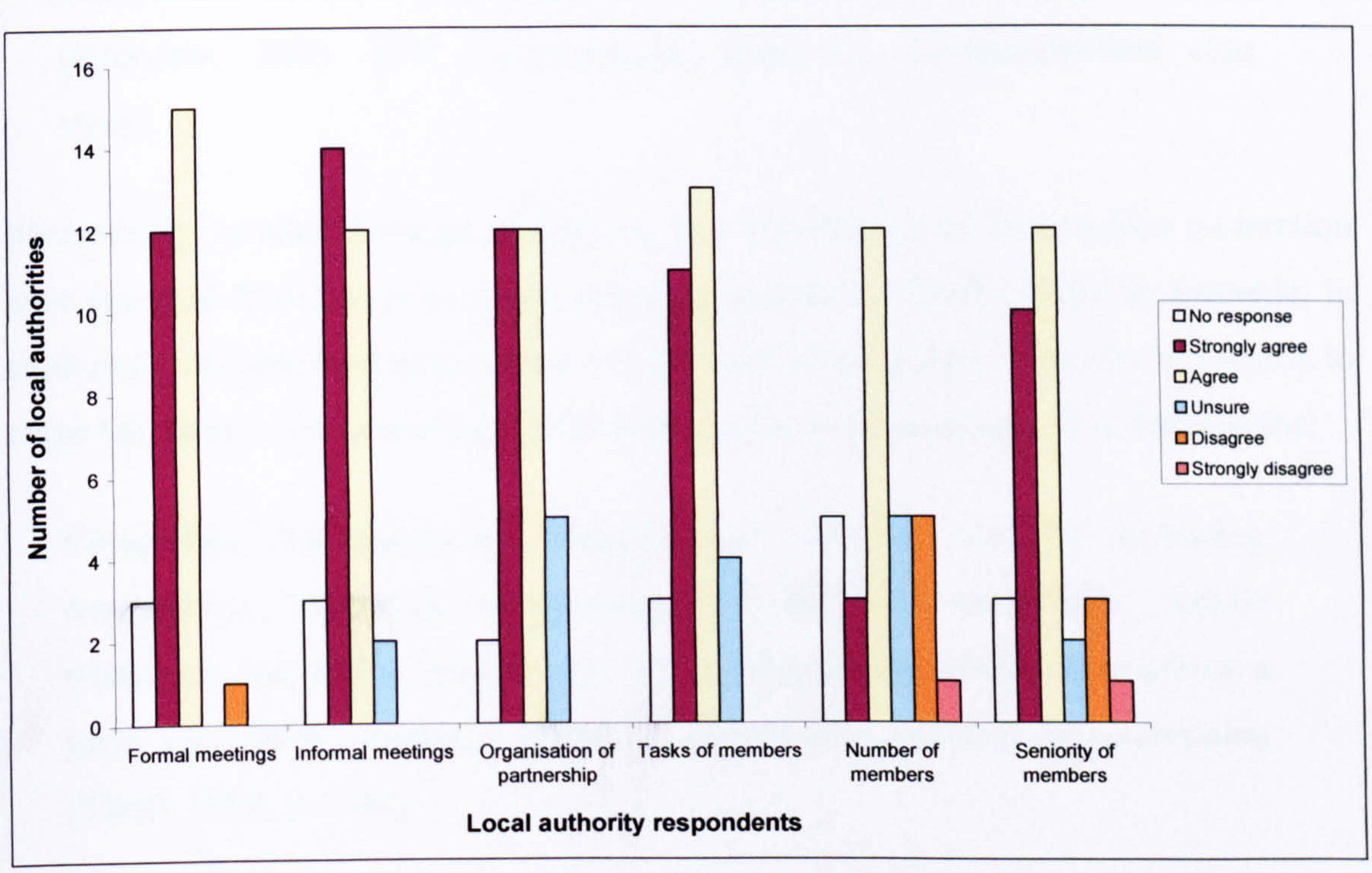


Figure 6.2 Local Authority Respondents' Rationale for the Success of CTCC



As established in the network governance literature (Jessop, 2003; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003), trust and the development of inter-personal relationships are important as the 'glue' that holds actors in governance networks together. These assumptions are supported by the case study findings:

> So I think it [interaction] is both informally and formally, but the major work gets done because of personal contacts between people (Interview, 2006: Health Co-ordinator, Plymouth case study).

> Informal networks and informal interactions are important as this is where 'things get done'. It's about building up trust with other people (Interview, 2006, Environmental Agency Officer, Peterborough case study).

> Whether its because they work on a project together or they just happen to get on quite well, I think personal relationships are important in this sort of work, and whether its just because people keep in touch with each other via email (Interview, 2006: NSP Environmental Executive, Northumberland case study).

Interestingly, similar findings concerning the significance of face-to-face interaction have emerged from the cyber space networks literature. Thrift (1996) for example, in exploring 'informational space' draws on his empirical material of the city of London to argue that there is an increasing requirement for face-to-face engagement because the:

> Complexity and uncertainty, coupled with other factors like increasing competition, increasing cosmopolitanism and an increasingly female workforce, has driven the denizens of the City towards having to construct a more and more structured space of face-to-face interaction/interpretation (Thrift, 1996, p. 1485).

Thrift (1996) suggests that virtual technologies can be used in their own right or as a way of organizing face-to-face interaction. They can also be used as a medium to connect people between face-to-face meetings. He explains that face-to-face meetings are required to assimilate, process, and understand information that is transferred

through virtual forms of interaction. Asheim et al., (2007) come up with similar arguments from their own research relating to how actors within the private sector interact. They add that face-to-face interaction can allow for the production of tacit knowledge and swift solutions to problems that cannot be achieved through virtual forms of interaction. This is because face-to-face interaction allows for uninterrupted, on the spot, simultaneous, two way flows of communication. Whilst Thrift, and Asheim et al.'s, (2007) research relates more directly to the market sector than the public one, their respective findings still highlight the suggested importance of face-to-face communication in the so called virtual society. This understanding is useful when conceptualizing CTCC governance networks as virtual ones, as the following quote by Thrift suggests:

> The rise of electronic telecommunications networks may well have produced more, not less, sociation, much of it face-to-face. In other words, we do not find an electronic world swept of people, we find hybrid 'actor networks' of people and electronic things (Haraway, 1991; Latour, 1993; Law, 1994), 'communities of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Star, 1995) which have long and involved histories and traditions (Thrift, 1996, p. 1473).

The community planning manger from the Aberdeen case study provides a quote that is not dissimilar to Thrift's own concerning virtual forms of interaction and the necessity for more tangible forms of interaction. However, as she points out, because of the focus on the need to address local targets, this can be at the expense of investing time into building up inter-personal relationships:

> Partnerships are at a much faster pace with e-mail, and deadlines are earlier. You used to have business meetings to take things forward now you use e-mails, so you loose that personal contact. But I actually found that these meetings is where you would build your relationship ... so we have lost the personal touch and it is a lot faster world than it was 20 years ago. And I think expectations are just much higher. You didn't have same level of audit 20 years ago, did not have targets or outcomes agreements, and financial restrictions were not as stringent (Interview 2006: Community Planning Manager, Aberdeen City Council).

Because delivering projects on the ground by addressing statutory targets can require more tangible processes, this may explain why the empirical survey findings suggest that two of the main constraints to CTCC are insufficient time and budget constraints. In summary, whilst globalisation has allowed for increasing connectivity of spaces and places, a combination of both technological use and the development of inter-personal relationships is important to allow for successful CTCC to take place. Practitioners need to use their expertise to evaluate whether in light of time and financial resources and the quality of learning that takes place, virtual interaction will suffice or whether physical interaction between actors is required. Too much emphasis on virtual interaction can compromise the fabric of networks that have otherwise been maintained through the development of inter-personal relationships. Conversely, too much emphasis on face-to-face engagement in CTCC can restrict the time that is invested in addressing local targets and developing strategies, for example, developing and producing community strategies.

The second implication in the first argument (that CTCC is affected because of time and budget constraints), is that local authority engagement in project-based CTCC can be compromised. The example discussed here is local authority involvement in structural funds programmes through Type I CTCC. Section 4.1.2 has shown through the empirical findings that UK-based local authority interaction within structural funds is not as prominent as the drivers (policies and funding programmes) by the European Commission that promote local authority networks would suggest. The key reason is the resource capacity of the local authority to apply for structural funds programmes. As Schultze (2003) notes, the smaller cities 'often lack the necessary administrative and organizational capacity' to participate in EU structural funds programmes (Schultze, 2003, p. 123). An example of this is taken from the Plymouth City Council case study. They once had a European Funds Officer, but the costs incurred in supporting this role did not outweigh the potential income that could be gained by being involved in European Funding programmes:

> We generally don't have the resources here to do big fund applications like that, they are a full time job, and we just do not have the team. There is no European team here anymore to do that, as no resources to keep it going. I think it was seen as a luxury, and at the time I do not think that there were

> many funds that we could apply for (Interview, 2006: Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council).

The findings from the Northumberland case study (Interview, 2006: EU Funds Officer, Northumberland County Council), also support the view that a dedicated person is required. Furthermore, Chapter Five has shown how statutory targets through the modernisation agenda have increasingly driven time and financial resources to be invested in national policy objectives. Although less documented in the literature, Martins and Pearce (1999) hypothesise that local authorities may not have the time to be involved in Structural Fund projects because of this. As the EU Funds Officer for Northumberland County Council explains, local authority Policy Officers 'may have too busy a workload or their local authorities will not permit them to go overseas' (Interview, 2006). Another resource constraint is the problems of drawing on match-funding, that is, the capacity of the local authority to find the appropriate match-funding from within the authority or from another institution (e.g. Regional Development Agency) to be eligible to be involved in structural funds programmes. If the local authority's application to the Commission is successful, they will financially support fifty-per-cent of a structural funds project, but the local authority has to match-fund this same amount. Local authorities require considerable financial autonomy to undertake match-funding, which relates to a wider problem of availability of financial resources. In drawing on the Northumberland case study, the European Funds Officer explains:

> Because it is a small authority, the monies from within this institution for match-funding are just not available – the number of competing priorities by a number of departments puts too much strain on the limited financial resources available. The financial resources are mainly controlled by the finance department – accountants – they may not understand the importance of the projects (Interview, 2006: European Funds Officer, Northumberland County Council).

Similarly the consultant for the East of England's Regional Assembly (EERA) from the Peterborough City Council case study explains how the bureaucracy of match-funding has made applications for European funds by local authorities more problematic:

> I think people have been quite sensible about bidding for European Funding now because, there was a time when you just bid for it because it was there, but obviously got burnt quite badly. You have to consider match-funding and even if it is only staff time, you have got to really want to do it (Interview, 2006: EERA Consultant).

Furthermore, there has to be a range of governance actors, for example private and civic sector partners, involved in both delivery of the project and the match-funding bid. From a local authority perspective, this means that there are financial, time consuming, and bureaucratic problems in co-ordinating the range of governance actors involved. As Martins and Pearce (2000) note in their survey findings of sub-national government engagement in the EU, problems with finding match-funding was the case for 65% of local authorities. They explain:

> Disagreements were more about the practical aspects, such as agreed priorities, and case flow problems especially where the private sector and voluntary organizations are concerned (Pearce, 2000, p. 597).

This shows that CTCC by its very nature will involve a combination of public, private, and voluntary actor networks. As has been argued in Chapter Two, it is not always possible to differentiate local authority governance networks from public-private actor ones. Interestingly, the EU Funds Officer (Northumberland) suggests the LSP structure has the potential to be used by local authorities and other governance actors to apply for structural funds. However, he critically claims that the Northumberland LSP (Northumberland Strategic Partnership – NSP) is not adventurous enough. He describes it as 'being more about navel gazing and less about being adventurous' in terms of involvement in match-funding programmes (Interview, 2006: EU Funds Officer, Northumberland County Council). In short, there are issues of personality, motivation, trust, and working to shared common objectives at play, alongside issues of resource constraints in undertaking match-funding bids. Other practitioners within the Northumberland case study are less critical of the NSP. They suggest that within the NSP, the Energy Executive position is funded by the county council and NSP for the

specific purpose of seeking European funding, albeit this position is to seek and be involved in both national and EU funded programmes relating to renewable energy[58]. Another constraint of match-funding is the incompatibility between time scales of funding and the time scales of project implementation/delivery. Interestingly, there should be the potential to link up community strategies with European projects, as Tewdwr-Jones et al., (2006) notes:

> The purpose of the Community Strategy is to provide a coordinated approach to the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the authority area. As such, community strategies provide an opportunity for a programmed approach and one in which public sector and external funding such as that from regional development agencies or the European Union can be targeted (Tewdwr-Jones et al., 2006, p. 537).

However, the Plymouth case study suggests that this is not necessarily the case as targets and objectives as outlined with Plymouth's SCS do not necessarily align with structural funds monies:

> There may be potentials but the timescales on developing European projects are not that useful in terms of matching funding together (Interview, 2006: Leader of Plymouth City Council).

Nevertheless, the leader of Plymouth City Council suggests that at the beginning of 2008 the new Objective II arrangements come into place which are project based rather than geographical, meaning there should be greater potential for a link-up between European funds and the SCS:

> One way that this link-up could be possible is through linking up the wealthy theme group of Plymouth's LSP which concerns economic development with the structural funds applications as these also concern economic development. However, this will become clearer once the new Objective II guidelines are made clear (Interview, 2006: Leader of Plymouth City Council).

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[58] Interviews, 2006: Government Office North East; One North East; Northumberland County Council Senior Environmental Policy Officer, NSP, Friends of the Earth, North East; Renewable Energy Executive.

Three main points emerge from the discussions concerning the time and financial constraints to CTCC and the role of structural funds above. First, despite the promotion of structural funds by the European Commission (Chapter Four), the above barriers have illustrated that the requirement for a multitude of actors to be drawn from within and between cities makes co-operation in applying for structural funds problematic. Second, the implication for Type I CTCC, because of the barriers to accessing structural funds, is that more formal forms of local authority networks/partnerships can be restricted. This can explain the emergence and spread of informal governing associated with Type II CTCC; and the more 'go it alone' approaches by local authorities that Chapters Four and Five have explored. Through the informal modes of governing, CTCC is less likely to be constrained by a meta-governor and the bureaucracy that this can bring; and virtual interaction does not necessitate the need to mobilize expansive amounts of time or financial resources.

Third, the above has shown how the LSP structure has the potential to take forward structural funds programmes. Thus, one has to question if it is local authority actors' ability and willingness to take part that should be the critique of the failing of actor's participation in structural funds programmes, rather than the European Commission meta-governor that promotes structural funds as a means to forge CTCC. For example, the European Commission as the meta-governor has encouraged actors to work together through the availability of structural funds to participate in the networks activities, and as an opportunity for self-organizational networks to develop and spread (Chapter Two). It is possible that the availability of structural funds for Western states has been reduced as the funds are directed towards new states (Sutcliffe and Kovacev, 2005). However, subject to the appropriate 'objective funding' areas, structural funds are made available for local authorities to participate within these.

The second argument of this section is that informal and formal network structures can constrain or enable CTCC. Furthermore, whether networks are informal or formal the importance of face-to-face interaction to facilitate project-working is important. Informal interaction is important because it makes it easier for people to talk more openly and express ideas. Informal discussions that take place outside the meeting room can set the scene for agreeing to agreements at the formal meeting:

> Often people who are going to these meetings have open minds, and if you sow the seed and a few people are thinking the same thing, and then you present your argument at the meeting, or someone does, then you can gain agreement like that (Interview, 2006: PECT Policy Officer, Peterborough City Council case study).

Informal interaction can be seen as an effective process in the building up of contacts, relationships and knowledge. But more formal mechanisms are required to institutionalize the partnership or network working to encourage participants to take things forward:

> You need formal structures in place to set-up and to encourage partnerships, and then informal working to get players to sign up which can be done by word of mouth, by personal contact. It is by historical joint work that in the past has built up trust and understanding between individual human beings that are public servants, and ... you know, you can go a long way on that (Interview, 2006: LSP Co-ordinator for Health, Plymouth City Council).

> Informal networks are good for discussing ideas, but you need formal networks in place through stated objectives and targets, 'to get things done' (Interview, 2006: Association of North East Councils - Improved Partnership Officer).

Successful co-operation across all three types of CTCC involves a combination of face-to-face and virtual forms of interaction, as well as both informal and formal processes. Whilst it is correct to note that informal and formal relationships can be of a virtual nature, it is also true that it is the development of both formal and informal relationships through personal interaction that is very important for delivering policy in the ground through CTCC. However, as the LSP co-ordinator for education in the Plymouth case study notes, 'you can't just put people into the same room and expect them to trust each other' (Interview, 2006). In short, successful CTCC takes place through trust which develops over time through the development of inter-personal relationships. Thus, whilst the policy networks literature (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996) (Section 2.2.1) has drawn attention to the role of resource interdependency in facilitating the success of networks, the above have drawn attention to the role of inter-personal

relationships. This is in line with the governance networks literature (Jessop, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing 2003). However, the role of resources cannot be ignored because their availability can either constrain or enable the extent to which face-to-face interaction can take place, to allow for the development of inter-personal relationships. In short, resource interdependency is an important enabling factor of CTCC. Furthermore, whilst categorization of formal and informal structures can prove useful for conceptualizing the different means of co-operation between actors, the empirical findings show that informal and formal structures blur, are dynamic, and overlap. The next section explores in greater depth the role that actors play within networks/partnerships to allow for successful CTCC to take place.

6.2.2 The Role that Actors Play

As highlighted in Chapter Two, scholars in the governance literature (Coleman and Perl, 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Leitner et al., 2003; Marsh, 1998a, 1998b;) have talked extensively about the role of actors in taking things forward to achieve targets, and in getting their message across to influence policy-making decisions and outcomes. This section draws on the empirical material to build on this work. There are three main arguments. First, individuals are critical to the success or failure in CTCC - whilst actors may be part of a network they can also, to varying degrees, act independently of this to take things forward, for example, in developing and putting together a Climate Change Action Plan, or Sustainable Community Strategy. This relates to the opportunity, seniority, and personality of an actor, as factors that can make a difference to accomplishing governance objectives and outcomes. Second, is the role of competition between actors in CTCC. Third, that when actors leave networks/partnerships this can be detrimental and destabilize the governing of self-organizational networks.

According to the literature, the motivation and enthusiasm of elected officials, actors with leadership and those who have personal authority are actors that have the power to make a difference (Jeffrey, 2001; Pearce, 2000; Reilly, 2001; Schultze; 2003). The empirical survey findings (Figures 6.1 and 6.2) show that when combining the total of 'agreed' and 'strongly agreed' responses per variable, the motivation of an individual

actor (27 respondents) to be involved in CTCC scores highly as a factor that allows for the success of CTCC. Interestingly, the empirical survey findings do not suggest that there is an important role for elected members (6 respondents) or for senior individuals (4 respondents) as factors that influence successful governing of CTCC overseas or in the UK. However, the qualitative aspects of the empirical survey findings (Figures 6.1 and 6.2) have shown that respondents identify the seniority of actors as important – for example, the motivation and political will of the chief executive, and organizational leadership. Furthermore in support of these findings, Figures 6.1 and 6.2 show that when adding 'strongly agree' and 'agree' together, 13 respondents consider the absence of political will to be an important factor that hinders CTCC. The case studies provide examples of how the seniority of actors has influenced engagement in the UK. The quote below taken from the Aberdeen City Council case study shows how the involvement of senior actors within networks - in this instance Type I CTCC as it was dependent on structural funds - through the DEMOS project (Section 4.3.1) can actually hinder CTCC because the co-operation becomes too formalized:

> Informality was an important part of the DEMOS project, and this was made possible because they did not have directors and elected members involved in the actual field visits, and therefore the whole protocol side of it was kept to a minimum (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

However, the Community Planning Officer also notes that Senior Officers and managers have been invited to some of the meetings as it is important to: 'get them on board when strategic decisions have to be made around community engagement to support its development' (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

The second example, and one of the most significant and prominent examples of Type II CTCC concerning the influence of an actor from across the four case studies, is taken from Plymouth County Council. This involves the transfer of the LSP model from Darlington to Plymouth. The former Chief Executive of Darlington brought his knowledge of this model with him to Plymouth:

So Plymouth have had to adapt, a chief executive has come in and he has come from a successful authority, and he has used the healthy, safe, stronger and wise mechanism of the LSP before, so I suppose that is where the change has happened, and the city council itself has had a bit of a sea change, partly because of his influence I think, and there is much more openness to community involvement now going on (Interview, 2006: Plymouth Community Partnership, director).

> When our new Chief Executive joined us 15 months ago, he kind of brought from his previous authority the LSP the way in which they had done it, and you know if you have got good practice, you may as well just use it rather than re-invent the wheel, and it just saves so much time, it works, lets do it, lets adapt it … so that it reflects our priorities and at the same time it works. It's simple isn't it (Interview, 2006: Leader of Plymouth City Council).

The LSP transfer illustrates how one actor has the power to bring about policy change within a local authority. In short, CTCC can be about one individual. The transfer of the chief executive from Darlington to Plymouth illustrates how actors can move between cities and involve themselves in other networks and partnerships. Whilst the transfer of an elected official is an example of CTCC, it is problematic to suggest that links between institutions are forged, as links between authorities often concern actors within them. Rather, this is an example of CTCC as a governing process of policy learning, and how one individual can facilitate policy learning between two institutions even if a network does not exist between two institutions. The policy learning literature (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Stone, 2001, 2004) draws attention to the role of elected officials in policy transfer, learning processes between cities through the physical transfer of an actor from one city to another on a permanent basis are not discussed. Rather, the emphasis is on policy learning through approaching an actor from another institution in face-to-face meetings:

> If governments are searching for policy solutions to new or changing problems, then they are increasingly likely to look for 'solutions' abroad. This is much easier than it was in the past because of the growth in all forms of communication; politicians and civil servants from different countries now meet more frequently, in bilateral as well as multi-lateral meetings. At the

> same time, policy entrepreneurs 'sell' policies around the world (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000, p. 21).

Whilst the quote above highlights that policy learning takes place between individuals from different institutions at national levels, this understanding is relevant to analysis of policy learning at sub-national levels (Section 5.1.1). In analysis of policy learning through the Beacon Council Scheme, Rashman and Hartley suggest that policy learning can take place through 'secondments and exchanges' of Policy Officers to another institution (Rashman and Hartley, 2002, p. 526). However, the concept of an elected official transferring from one authority to another and bringing along the knowledge is not highlighted.

The third main argument is how networks and partnerships can be destabilized when actors leave networks. As the following quotes taken first from the Aberdeen City Council case study, and second the Northumberland County Council case study suggest:

> It is difficult to say if the DEMOS project improved our relation with Edinburgh City as they have had a turnover of personnel, so the people that we were working with are not there any more, or not doing the same job anymore (Interview, 2006: Community Planning Officer, Aberdeen City Council).

> It's ... I mean one of the problems we have here is that often there is a high turn around of staff in local authorities. So you convince one person [about getting involved in a project] and then they move on and then you have to convince another person (Interview, 2006: NSP Environmental Executive).

Furthermore, should an individual leave a local authority, then there is the likelihood that networking, whether it is the contact actor, relationship, or knowledge resource with the contact, can also be lost. Hence, formal structures and mechanisms are required to be in place that can allow for this networking capital to be contained within the local authority. It may relate, for example, to a database that contains a list of informal contacts and a brief description of their association with the individual concerned (Interview 2006: Climate Change Officer, DEFRA). In turn, this means that there are structures in place that can allow for governing within the network for CTCC

to take place. Actors within networks can use the database as a mechanism to maintain links between institutions. This section has discussed the role of actors in networks and has also explored how links between institutions can be maintained, or not. The next section focuses more comprehensively on the role of structure in networks and partnerships.

6.2.3 Exploring Trust and the 'Rules of the Game' as the 'Glue' that Structures the Network

This section draws on a range of empirical examples to illustrate how the build-up of trust and establishing the 'rules of the game', which are seen by governance scholars (Jessop, 2003; Le Galès, 2001; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Section 2.1.4) as the 'glue' of governance networks, are very important factors that enable the facilitation of CTCC. Trust is suggested to be the main co-ordination system of governance networks because actors trust each other to adhere to their respective responsibilities. Furthermore, they feel a duty to contribute to achieving common goals and objectives, acknowledging that co-operation is the most effective way to achieve this (Bevir and Rhodes, 2007; Borzel, 1998; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; O'Toole Jr., 2007; Peters and Pierre, 2002; Rhodes, 1998; Sørensen and Torfing, 2004):

> Networks succeed where there is trust, reciprocity, cooperation and agreement (Bevir and Rhodes, 2007, p. 77).

> Negotiations in policy networks are based on communication and trust and aim at achieving joint outcomes, which have a proper value for the actors (Borzel, 1998, p. 262).

The concept of trust is important because as Marcussen and Torfing (2003) note in defining governance networks, self-organizational networks includes the idea that there is a framework in which the 'rules of the game' can be established. There are different ways of understanding the 'rules of the game'. The examples below concern the role of formal rules. As Marcussen and Torfing (2003, p. 15) note 'it might be the case, for instance, that negotiation in governance networks is shaped by a set of very formal rules'. They explain that a means to self-regulate interaction is for the network actors to formulate formal rules – for example, the use of 'contracts' as a means to take forward

agreed agendas. Other types of rules are established through negotiation that concern: 'collective rules of appropriateness' in terms of behaviour and the conduct of individual actors (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003, p. 14); shared values by the actors in the network concerning ideals, assumptions, and social theories, which means that rules are defined about how the network can address a policy problem. The main way that negotiation is undertaken within the network is to establish the 'rules of the game' (Jessop, 2003) which are defined and re-defined as new knowledge is produced concerning a specific policy problem. It is through the development of trust that negotiations can take place in establishing the 'rules of the game' of the network. This is because actors develop inter-personal relationships which allow for an understanding between actors that there will be bargains and disagreements between them. These relationships also allow for the exchange of ideas in developing new understandings and for actors to work together in establishing the 'rules of the game' to achieve common shared objectives to develop policies and implant these on the ground, and for policy learning to take place. Therefore, exploring the 'rules of the game' can be used in analysis of governance networks to help to explain policy change (Bevir and Rhodes, 2007; Bulkeley, 2004; Richardson, 2004). The 'rules of the game' allow for analysis of 'how individual actors respond to dilemmas' (Bevir and Rhodes, 2007, p. 82).

The main argument in this section is that it is important to establish the 'rules of the game' (which can be modified as new knowledge/ideas are produced) at the outset of any project to allow for successful working practises to occur, otherwise governance networks can fail, and be problematic to fix. As the following quotes illustrate, actors across the case studies have highlighted that personal interaction is only really valuable if you know why you are at the meeting table in the first place. Actors need to understand what the 'rules of the game' are from the outset, and they also need to know what their contribution to the co-operation can bring:

> A problem is that people are at meetings but say 'I don't know why I am here, I don't know what I can bring to the partnership', and it creates despondency (Interview, 2006: LSP Co-ordinator for Education, Plymouth City Council).

People will attend meetings if they know why they are there, otherwise they would think they are wasting their time (Interview, 2006: LSP Co-ordinator for Health, Plymouth City Council).

You have got to go to your partnership and want to make it work. You need to know why you are there. You have to have a collective goal and ambition, you have got to work together (Interview, 2006: Chief Executive, Aberdeen Association of Voluntary Councils).

Three detailed examples from the case studies illustrate why it is important to establish the 'rules of the game' at the outset of CTCC. The first example is of Type II CTCC which involves participation by local authority actors in networks on a voluntary basis. It is taken from the Peterborough City Council case study and concerns the Peterborough-Cambridge climate change partnership. The climate change partnership is only a couple of years old, but its potential as a means and a link through which Cambridge County and Peterborough Environmental City Trust (PECT who operate on Peterborough City Council's behalf) work has never been realized. The Cambridge County Council Climate Change Officer describes the climate change partnership network as existing in name form only. One of the main ways that the partnership was going to be activated was through working in partnership with CRed (a carbon community reduction project), a private sector organization. However, this was never realized because negotiations stalled with them. In early 2005, the climate change partnership was looking to build on a conference that they had held with CRed looking at how the authority could draw on the knowledge of CRed and work with them to promote to individuals and communities about to achieve carbon emission reductions[59]. However, the financial issues were not discussed at the beginning of the project with CRed, and therefore negotiations stalled. In short, 'the partnership does not have the kinds of money that CRed are asking for' (Interview, 2006: Cambridge City Council Climate Change Officer). There was no room for negotiation as the climate change partnership could not mobilize the financial resources that CRed were looking for, and CRed were not prepared to reduce their costs. Whilst this is also an example of a

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[59] CRed run a community carbon reduction programme, and operate out of the Tyndall Centre at the University of East Anglia. CRed undertake community engagement work based around individuals cutting their carbon emissions. Their work is orientated towards the mitigation end of climate change. http://www.cred-uk.org/centralcontent.aspx?intCID=1 'About Cred' [accessed 15th September 2007].

resource constraint, it concerns the rules of the game because discussions concerning the availability of resources to take forward partnership working were not discussed to define how the project could be taken forward within the financial constraints.

The second example is taken from the Plymouth City Council case study. Whilst this is not an example of CTCC but rather of partnership working within a city, it does highlight the conflict involved in establishing the 'rules of the game', and how these types of problems could potentially arise in co-operation between cities in developing strategies or reports, whether in Type I or Type II CTCC. In this example, conflict was not so much about resource bargaining, but the fact that the interim report (that is the proposal document for the on-going development of Plymouth's Sustainable Community Strategy) was produced without consultation with certain actors. Actors that should have been involved in this report were not invited to the negotiation table to establish the 'rules of the game' – that is, in terms of input of policy ideas, local needs and concerns that the report should have taken into consideration:

> The interim report came in for a lot of flak as it was produced as a one off without any consultation, and there is a lot in there that needs definition, and when people read it, it was 'hang on, nobody asked me' (Interview, 2006: Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council).
>
> I have been involved in the former City Strategy. No involvement in the interim statement or I have been ignored by it! (Interview, 2006: LSP Co-ordinator for Education, Plymouth City Council).

The third example that is taken from the Aberdeen community planning case study illustrates why it is important to establish the 'rules of the game' very well. Again this example highlights the problem of partnership working within a city, but such problems could be reflective of tensions between cities. A senior actor from Communities Scotland that is involved in Aberdeen's City Alliance (equivalent of the English LSP) explains that they drafted in and funded a consultant to do a review of Aberdeen's Community Plan in 2005 because they were concerned that the agenda was being dominated by Aberdeen City Council:

We deliberately steered him into the commission because we felt they needed to listen and change – the rest of the partners, particularly Aberdeen City Council. The main thing is that they [Aberdeen City Council] saw it as their own partnership. The agenda was domineered by council agendas, the running of the thing was domineered by Council Officers (Policy Officers), and therefore by default the agenda was domineered by their influence. Very often a lot of the work that was agreed would never happen because the Officers had their own agenda. This is highly controversial stuff I am talking about, so we were concerned that if it continued like that there was no value coming out of it (Interview, 2006: Area Director, Communities Scotland).

However, there also has to be a recognition that in reality not all actors will define the 'rules of the game' as this is not practical given the many competing differences, and time, financial, and labour intensity that this would involve. Furthermore, the role that resources play within the Cities Alliance framework and how this links to the 'rules of the game' within this can not be ignored. Communities Scotland for example explain how they want the Cities Alliance to take things forward, but this is problematic because partner actors are not mobilizing their own resources to allow for this to happen:

> People are loosing sight of core objectives. Not getting money from key partners to take things forward, can get really frustrating, and you are thinking 'why turn up at the next meeting?' (Interview, 2006: Area Director, Communities Scotland).

However, actors from other institutions argue that partnership working should not be about the mobilization of financial resources as there are other resources that can be contributed, for example, the sharing of knowledge and expertise:

> For us, it is important we are all seen as equal partners and it's not about money. That's clearly important for us ... but it does not mean we do not have the right to be here (Interview, 2006: Assistant Director, Plymouth Community Partnership).

The last quote brings to the forefront questions such as who controls the network, and does this come down to the financial resources involved as to who has the power. In summary, two lessons emerge from the adaptation and community planning examples above that illustrate why governance through CTCC has the potential to fail or have failings. First, one of the main reasons as to why negotiations have stalled in all three examples is because of the failings by the actors involved to establish the 'rules of the game' at the outset. For the climate change partnership, because the 'rules of the game' were not established at the outset, the capacity for the governance network actors to work together never materialized, and power struggles came down to the financial resources available. For the interim report in Plymouth, the fact that a range of actors were not invited to the negotiation table to be involved in the 'rules of the game' meant that there were delays and problems, and this has created tensions and mistrust, between some of the main actors involved[60]. For the Aberdeen case study, a number of actors from the private and voluntary sectors were not involved in establishing the 'rules of the game' – rather, Aberdeen City Council were responsible for this which has created frustrations for the other actors involved.

6.3 Conclusions

The empirical material in this section has contributed to the on-going development and knowledge building of the second generation of governance network literature (Sections 2.2.2, and 2.3). Second generation network theorists draw attention to the nature of networks, and processes of interaction between actors within these (Kern and Bulkeley, 2008; Skelcher et al., 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005, 2007a, 2007b). This chapter has identified four key factors that can variously constrain or enable governing through self-organizational networks. These are: the ability to mobilize resources, in particular financial ones; the need for a combination of physical and virtual interaction; the role of trust and inter-personal relationships and the need for a governing mix between hierarchy, external meta-governing of the networks, and the self-organizational networks themselves.

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[60] To explain the significance of this, some of the actors within the Plymouth case study were reluctant at first to be involved in interviews because of the various tensions between them which were at risk of becoming publicly exposed by the PhD research. Furthermore, there were concerns by the actors that this public exposure would cause further injury to their working relationships.

The first section has explored the role of hierarchy in self-organizational networks. It has shown how the nation state can directly intervene in local policy-making to take a local authority through reform programmes and involve itself in local policy-making and delivery where a local authority is seen to be failing in a policy area. In such cases, the state has the capacity and 'power over' to force a local authority to look at the good or best practice of another. It has shown how face-to-face engagement is critical to the networks success. It has also shown how a focus on national priorities can be at the expense of local ones. Similarly, the first section has also drawn on an example from the Northumberland County Council case study to highlight how actors within institutions can be a meta-governor to 'steer' and facilitate governance networks/partnerships in line with national priorities. However, where actors in the network are engaged within this on a voluntary basis, there can be failings in meta-governance. Reasons for this have been examined – which for the most part have concerned: (1) the resource capacity of the local authority and GONE actor (meta-governor) to work together to deliver policies on the ground and (2) conflict between priorities and concerns at regional, national, and supranational levels. In short, the processes at play within an MLG framework are messy and bring political tensions which cannot be easily resolved. Enablers of CTCC include the ability for all actors to establish the 'rules of the game'. Co-operation is taken forward through shared common objectives. In such situations, local authority actors will voluntarily mobilize their own resources (i.e. financial and time) to be involved in CTCC.

The second section has explored the internal dynamics of networks and partnerships. It has drawn attention to internal meta-governing, and how both the structure and agency within the network/partnership can constrain or enable CTCC. It has shown how it is important to involve all participating actors in establishing the 'rules of the game', and to have the capacity to take things forward through having financial resources available. It has shown that both establishing the 'rules of the game' and the mobilization of resources are factors that can structure the network. This is interesting as the governance networks' literature (Jessop, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) has generally moved on to suggest that it is establishing the 'rules of the game' that structures the network (Section 2.2.2). In other words, as the Peterborough City Council and CRed example shows, an institutionalized framework in which the 'rules of the game' can be established for co-operation through governance networks is

important. However, this should not be at the exclusion of considering the resources available in these discussions that can allow for subsequent action. The roles which actors play within networks are subject to the resources available to allow this to happen. Actors control resources and yet the structure is subject to resources (Leitner et al., 2002; Marsh, 1998b).

The second section has also shown that governance can fail, for example, if the 'rules of the game' are not agreed at the outset. Because of governance failure, this raises questions about the extent to which trust and negotiation as the co-ordinating mechanism of governance networks operates as effectively as it should. The governance networks literature (Borzel, 1998; Jessop; 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Loffler, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Section 2.2) does not suggest what happens when governance breaks down, and how to reignite/fix the governance processes to resolve this. The empirical material within this chapter has not provided an answer to this at this stage of the research findings. They have, however, shown that if important lessons are learned such as establishing the 'rules of the game' at the outset, involving all players in the negotiation process, and recognition as to the importance of mobilizing resources for taking things forward, then this can create a firm foundation upon which co-operation can be facilitated, rather than hindered.

Recognizing the factors that variously constrain and enable governing of networks/partnerships has been useful for two main reasons. First, to explain why CTCC Type I and Type II as a formal mode of governing is not as obvious as some of the drivers of formal local authority networks/partnerships (Chapter Four) suggests; albeit that these factors can also explain why more informal forms of CTCC through CTCC Type II are more prominent than is promoted by the top-down drivers of CTCC. Second, the enablers and barriers of CTCC highlight the policy implications of understandings about local authority engagement. They can for example, explain how and why CTCC can help, to a greater or lesser extent, to allow for more effective local policy-making and outcomes. Furthermore, their identification can allow for solutions to be developed to overcome the barriers to facilitate more successful CTCC – for example the lessons as highlighted above can be learnt from, and the recognition as to the potential of LSPs to take forward partnership working and to link authorities should be taken into consideration. In summary, it is through informal modes of governing in

Type II CTCC that local authorities have the resource capacities and motivation to adapt their own self-organizational approaches to engagement; and to internally govern, row and self-steer. Whilst they may not be accountable for their actions by governing in this way, this allows them to draw on knowledge as appropriate, and to co-operate through networks. The next chapter is the conclusion of the thesis, and highlights the main findings of the research. It details more comprehensively the policy implications of CTCC for more effective local policy-making.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions

The thesis has examined the extent and nature of CTCC for sustainable development among UK-based local authorities. The introductory chapter highlighted how policy-makers and analysts have placed significant emphasis on achieving urban sustainability because cities are seen as an arena within which environmental problems are created and can be addressed. Local authorities are seen as central to this project by policy-makers and analysts who believe that various forms of co-operation, termed CTCC throughout the thesis, are an important way to achieve sustainable development objectives. The argument made in the thesis is that CTCC is a specific form of governance, rather than a higher mode of network governance that permeates the political landscape, that network governance scholars (Eising and Kohler-Koch, 1999a; 1999b; Klijn and Skelcher, 2007) suggest is the case with public-private networks (Section 2.2). CTCC is a structure of governance that occurs as links are forged between institutions. It is also a set of processes of governing. Local authorities engage with each other in policy learning in the sharing of knowledge, experience, and expertise – to achieve learning outcomes - for more effective local policy-making. Local authorities also engage with each other in processes of governance to lobby supra-national (e.g. European Commission) and national institutions (central government) to influence policy-making and policy outcomes. Thus, the thesis has undertaken an analysis of the structures, governance processes, and learning and policy outcomes of CTCC governance. This chapter draws together the overall conclusions of the thesis and assesses its policy implications. First, the theoretical implications of the study are discussed. Second, an overview of the main empirical findings of the thesis is provided. Third, the policy implications and policy recommendations of the study are examined. Finally, recommendations for future research are highlighted.

7.1 Theoretical Implications

The research conducted here on CTCC raises a series of questions and implications for the conceptualization of environmental governance. The key 'conceptual' contribution of the thesis has been in thinking about the role of CTCC in relation to the governance debates. It has informed this in four ways. First, the study has highlighted that the literature that examines governance as networks (Leitner et al., 2002; Marcussen and

Torfing, 2003; Rhodes, 1996; 1997; Stoker, 1998) is inconclusive on several vital questions concerning: the degree of CTCC taking place on the ground; the contribution of CTCC to urban sustainability through its governing roles; how such processes take place and the realities of their implementation (Sections 2.1 and 2.2). In order to address these issues, there is a need to go beyond the 'hollowing out' (Rhodes, 1997, p. 138) and restructuring of the state (Brenner, 1999; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999) (Section 2.2.1), multi-level governance (Section 2.1.2), and debates on the shift from government to governance (Jessop, 1999; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Stoker, 1998) (Section 2.1.3) to examine the role of meta-governance and hierarchy (Jessop, 2000; 2002; Kooiman, 2003) (Section 2.1.4). Thus, networks are only self-regulating to a 'certain extent' (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003, p. 35) because they can be created, controlled, and steered by a meta-governor and orchestrated through a form of hierarchy (e.g. EU, State) (Jessop, 2000) (Section 2.1.4).

Second, the presence of hierarchy and meta-governance in the political landscape means that the plurality of governance needs to be taken into consideration in conceptualizing environmental governance in four ways: (1) An understanding of the role of meta-governance in shaping CTCC is critical. The Best Value regime has been a significant driver of mandatory process-based benchmarking activities concerning PL/PT (Hartley and Downe, 2007; Rashman and Radnor, 2005). Best Value has encouraged tacit learning and formalized and physical forms of engagement between local authorities (Section 5.3.1). Furthermore, the Best Value regime has meant that local authorities undertake voluntary benchmarking activities in order to promote innovation and performance improvement. (Section 5.3.2); (2) a governance mix of networks, meta-governance, and hierarchy is needed to achieve sustainable development objectives. A clear illustration of this is in Chapter Six where the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) orchestrated forms of CTCC between Plymouth City Council and London Borough of Lambeth so that Plymouth could undertake policy learning to improve on its policy delivery of its Crime Reduction Action Plan; (3) it is not always suffice to differentiate Type 1 (nested) and Type II (non-nested) Multi-Level Governance (MLG) processes. Rather interaction between local authorities, regional and national actors can involve a combination of both these processes. For example, meta-governance can involve clear nested scales of authority, but interaction can be of a type where the meta-governor is almost part of the network; (4) the analysis also

suggests that while CTCC may be a 'networked' form of governance, it is not replacing hierarchy. The Plymouth case study shows the important role of intervention through steering and controlling governance networks (Section 6.1).

Third, this thesis had drawn on the policy networks (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1997) and governance networks (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005) literature to examine how the key characteristics in governing through networks – resources, face-to-face interactions and the development of inter-personal relationships and trust – are relevant for understanding CTCC. However, because the policy networks and governance networks literature neglect the governing processes that take place between actors in policy learning, the thesis has introduced a governance framework (Section 2.3). This is an analytical tool that has drawn on these existing conceptions of self-organizing forms of governance to provide substance to the debates on the autonomy of CTCC, and has been used to create information about the governing processes of PL/PT within CTCC, as it has been applied to an examination of the case studies. The framework has been developed on the basis of the argument by Marcussen and Torfing (2003) that governance networks are 'self-regulating to a certain extent' (Marcussen and Torfing, 2003, p. 7). The framework identifies three types of CTCC on a continuum. In Type I CTCC, local authority networks and partnerships have limited autonomy as they are strongly controlled by a meta-governor through legislation and conditional funding programmes. In Type II CTCC, local authority networks and partnerships have more autonomy, as practitioners are involved in them on a voluntary basis. However, there maybe a meta-governing influence – for example, the European Commission, central government, or regional institutions - through providing guidance and advice to facilitate governing within the network. Objectives of the network can be established by the participants themselves or come from the external meta-governor.

In Type III CTCC, local authority practitioners have considerably more autonomy in the steering of the network. Type III CTCC suggests that practitioners have the resource capacity to be involved in lobbying to influence policy-making and policy-outcomes at the supra-national and national tiers of governance. Furthermore, the framework has been drawn upon in the empirical analysis to examine the extent to which the characteristics of governing practices (e.g., linkages; key actors; co-ordinating mechanism of governance) vary across the three types of CTCC; and to explore

governing processes within CTCC which are absent from the governance literature. The advantage in developing the framework has been to inform and bring clarity to the contradictory debates in the governance literature that discusses the emergence of self-organizational networks and the political opportunity for CTCC. The three type CTCC framework is used to explore the argument that self-organizational networks are not as autonomous as some governance scholars suggest (e.g. Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Leitner et al., 2002; Peters, 2000; Rhodes, 1996; 1997) because of the presence of the meta-governor that can both create and facilitate governing through CTCC (Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) (Section 2.1.4).

Fourth, is that face-to-face contact which is promoted in the policy networks and governance networks literature as being the 'glue' that holds networks together, is not necessarily needed for policy learning. This challenges concepts of learning because it suggests that tacit knowledge is not necessary for policy transfer and policy implementation. Therefore, the governance can be virtual in nature. Tacit learning can take place through virtual governance, for example, through in-depth e-mail exchanges. However, the thesis has shown how policy learning can take place specifically through the development of explicit knowledge by the downloading of policy documents and the browsing of web-based material provided by other local authorities. The next section highlights the key research questions and discusses the conclusions to them.

7.2 Synthesis of the Main Findings

The central aim of the thesis has been to examine the implications of CTCC for conceptualising environmental governance. The four research questions have helped to address this:

1. To what extent are UK-based local authorities engaging in CTCC?

2. What sorts of links, exchanges and networks are being established through the practices of CTCC undertaken by UK local authorities?

3. How, and with what implications, does policy transfer and policy learning emerge through CTCC?

4. To what extent, and with what effect, do practices of CTCC disturb existing forms of policy delivery and implementation for urban sustainability?

Conclusions to each of the respective research questions are discussed in the sub-sections below.

7.2.1 Research Question One: The Extent of CTCC Engagement

Chapters Four and Five have explored the extent to which CTCC is taking place amongst UK local authorities. The survey findings have suggested that over half of the local authorities surveyed suggest involvement in overseas or domestic CTCC. Generally, there is more engagement taking place within the domestic arena than overseas, though it is difficult to assess this in a historical context as little meaningful data exists. The extent of CTCC can be explored through the CTCC typology framework – the three types of CTCC found. In Type I CTCC and overseas engagement, which concerns involvement in European funding programmes, six of the thirty one local authorities surveyed are involved in community initiative funding schemes that comes from structural funds (1 respondent lists LEADER+ and 5 respondents list INTERREG). This is not that high given the recognition of the importance of European funding programmes for driving CTCC and public-private co-operation in the literature (Benington and Harvey, 1998; Leitner et al., 2002; Schultze, 2003). Furthermore, local authorities' involvement overseas appears to be based on membership in name only – passive engagement, rather than more active means. Therefore, whilst there are a number of links between local authorities permeating the political landscape for Type I overseas, this does not necessarily mean that CTCC is actually taking place. However, within the domestic arena, Type I CTCC has an important active role and is widespread in the political landscape because it has been driven by legislation (16 respondents). The apparent rise in domestic Type I CTCC is because central government has been instrumental in pushing Best Value as a driver of CTCC through mandatory benchmarking activities between local authorities within the UK. Thus, the modernisation agenda has facilitated CTCC within the UK, while reducing capacity for involvement in transnational co-operation through European funded programmes. Whilst the empirical survey findings have suggested a decrease in

Type I CTCC overseas, Type II is more widespread and predominates. Local authorities are involved in a range of formal transnational networks not connected to funding programmes, but undertake this on a voluntary basis. Similarly, within the domestic arena there is more evidence for links and active participation in Type II CTCC. For Type II CTCC overseas and domestically, Chapters Four and Five have suggested that where co-operation is taking place this is in recognition of the potential benefits that co-operation can bring to local authorities: for example, greater cost efficiency, more effective policy-making, learning outcomes, and additional income. This also suggests that local authorities value the importance of co-operation to address sustainable development. The thesis survey and case study findings have had less to say about the lobbying processes and its outcomes through Type III CTCC both overseas and within the domestic arena (Chapter 4). The absence of evidence supporting activity through Type III CTCC overseas and domestically, suggests that it is not a prominent process of governing amongst UK-based local authorities.

There are a number of explanations for the patterns of CTCC taking place discussed above that concern the drivers of CTCC. Local authorities are involved in transnational networks that do not necessarily relate to the recognized drivers of CTCC – for example, European funding programmes, Local Agenda 21 and the Fifth Environmental Action Plan - as discussed in Chapter Four. Therefore there are also a range of bottom-up informal drivers of CTCC relevant to all three types. These concern the governance practices that take place within networks, for example, the personality and interest of practitioners to be involved in CTCC practices, and the availability of local authority resources to facilitate engagement. This suggests that formal drivers are not as significant as past studies (e.g. see Goldsmith and Sperling, 1997; Martins and Pearce, 1999) (Section 4.2.1) would suggest and formal drivers are only one way of mobilizing CTCC. There are three reasons for the apparent waning of international engagement in relation to the recognized formal drivers of CTCC. First, the drivers of CTCC have changed over time so that there is a decreased availability and significance of structural funds for facilitating CTCC for UK-based local authorities. Second, the processes of applying to be involved in European funding programmes have become bureaucratic so that practitioners do not consider the potential benefits sufficient to be involved within them (Section 6.2.1). Third, local authorities' priorities increasingly lie with mobilizing time, labour, and financial resources towards achieving statutory targets within their

administrative boundaries (Chapters Four and Five). In short, the modernisation agenda of central government has driven partnership working within cities, for example, through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) which can be at the expense of formal forms of co-operation transnationally.

7.2.2 Research Question Two: Links, Exchanges and Networks Established Through CTCC

The links, exchanges and networks – the forms of CTCC - between cities are complex and they can be dynamic, which has implications for the practices of CTCC. In drawing on the analytical framework developed in Section 2.3, and working on the basis of Marcussen and Torfing's (2003) definition and their arguments as to the dimensions that shape governance networks (Section 2.2.2), the thesis's findings suggest that there are eight important factors that shape the nature of CTCC. These are: formality; basis; temporality; activeness; power; plurality; virtuality; and sphere of networks and partnerships (Figure 7). These factors are discussed in turn whilst considering how they influence the three types of CTCC. Whilst the factors influencing Types I and II CTCC are based on evidence from the empirical survey and case study findings, the evidence is limited to analysing how they affect Type III CTCC. Type III is included in discussions below as appropriate, but is based on what it is likely to look like from evidence in the governance literature surrounding CTCC.

Table 7.1 Factors Influencing Types of CTCC

Factors	Type I	Type II	Type III
Formality	More formal interaction between local authorities and the EU/state in PL/PT. This is because of the formality in practices, rules and convention of co-operation, because of the strong meta-governing role.	Voluntary processes of informal interaction – more relaxed, personal, flexible means of interaction between local authorities and with the EU state concerning governing through PL/PT.	More formal interaction between local authority institutions and the EU/state. Formal processes that are undertaken in lobbying to influence policy learning and policy outcomes.
Basis	Strong presence of meta-governor (EU/state) means that PL/PT is undertaken by local authorities because of legislation (i.e. Best Value). However, it can also be undertaken because of financial incentives (e.g. structural funds).	Voluntary involvement in CTCC as practitioners have an interest in policy learning. Local authorities have the capacity to mobilize resources (financial, time, labour) to be involved in PL/PT.	Voluntary involvement in CTCC. Local authorities have the capacity to mobilize resources (financial, time, labour) to be involved in lobbying. Practitioners have an interest in lobbying to influence policy change.
Temporality	Long-term or short-term subject to external financial resources available. Long-term links between benchmarking local authorities but can be active or passive subject to CPA assessments.	Subject to strength of inter-personal relationships as actors can fall out with each other. Subject to people moving jobs. Subject to shared common objectives - can be active or passive.	Subject to strength of inter-personal relationships as actors can fall out with each other. Subject to people moving jobs. Subject to shared common objectives - can be active or passive.
Activeness	Active as funded to be involved in project-working; and legislation means there is on-going co-operation in benchmarking practices.	Passive and/or active, subject to the nature of co-operation. Short spurts of activity followed by passive links between authorities.	Passive and/or active, subject to the nature of co-operation. Short spurts of activity followed by passive links between authorities.
Power	'Power-over'. Strong hands-on control by meta-governor over facilitation of CTCC through control of financial resources. Potential of the state to implement hierarchical power and intervene in the governing of CTCC.	'Power to'. Local authorities mobilize their own resources to share knowledge, experience, to obtain learning and policy outcomes. There may be some guidance by a meta-governor, but this is hands-off.	'Power to'. Local authorities mobilize their own resources to share knowledge, experience, obtain learning and policy outcomes.
Plurality	Meta-governance, hierarchy, and networks.	Networks and hands-off meta-governing role.	Networks, but vertical links with institutions at other tiers of governance.
Virtuality	Face-to-face interaction, supplemented by virtual interaction.	Virtual, supplemented by face-to-face interaction.	Face-to-face interaction for meetings and also virtual interaction.

Sphere	Private-public actor networks because this form of network is promoted through European funding programmes	Practitioners have greater autonomy to choose whether they want to be involved in private-public actor networks between cities	Practitioners have greater autonomy to choose whether they want to be involved in private-public actor networks between cities

As with Marcussen and Torfing's (2003) dimensions of governance networks, 'formality' concerns the governing processes of CTCC. In Type I CTCC, interaction is primarily formal because of the formality in practices, rules, and convention of co-operation both between local authorities and with actors at other tiers of governance (e.g. European Commission and central government). This is because CTCC is strongly controlled by a meta-governor. Type II CTCC involves informal interaction between local authority practitioners and those at other tiers of governance because participation in networks is voluntary. Section 5.1.2 in particular has highlighted how practitioners in departments of a similar policy area in different local authorities will informally liaise with each other to discuss policy learning and how to address policy problems. Therefore, interaction is more relaxed, personal and flexible, and can allow for the development of inter-personal relationships and the build-up of trust where PL/PT takes place. However, this can depend on the extent to which the co-operation is of a virtual or physical nature (see 'virtuality' below). Furthermore, despite the informality in Type II CTCC there may still be agreed 'rules of the game' that have been developed by practitioners within the network which means that formality is associated with practices of governing (Chapter Six). Type III CTCC is likely to involve more formal engagement between local authority institutions and those at other tiers of governance because of the formal processes involved in lobbying to influence policy-learning and policy outcomes.

The second important variable in shaping CTCC is its 'basis' – whether this is of a voluntary or mandatory nature (Chapters Four, Five and Six). Marcussen and Torfing (2003) call this 'origin' in their dimensions of governance networks. The basis of CTCC is strongly associated with the drivers of CTCC - In Type I CTCC local authorities either undertake PL/PT because this is mandatory, for example, due to Best Value legislation, or because of financial incentives (e.g. European funds). The significance of financial resources in the motivation of actors to be involved in networks cannot be underestimated (Benington and Harvey, 1998; Betsill and Bulkeley, 2004;

Bulkeley et al., 2003; Leitner et al., 2002; Ward and Williams, 1997). The difference between voluntary and mandatory CTCC is that in the former, local authorities choose to participate in CTCC with practitioners in other local authorities. In mandatory CTCC, through legislation and the threat of financial sanctions practitioners are forced to participate in networks and/or partnerships with other local authorities. In Type II CTCC, local authorities undertake voluntary processes of engagement transnationally as they seek to draw on policy learning. This can be as a response, for example, as to how to address a new piece of legislation (Chapter Five). Thus, there is more likely to be bottom-up informal drivers of policy learning, such as a genuine interest by practitioners to be involved in co-operation as they have an interest in learning outcomes. In Type III CTCC, local authorities are involved in lobbying processes on a voluntary basis, because they are interested in changing policy outcomes.

The third important variable is 'temporal forms' of CTCC. This can be equated with Marcussen and Torfing's (2003) 'duration' dimension. CTCC can both emerge and disappear for different periods of time subject to the structure of the network, and/or the actors involved. In Type I CTCC, European funding programmes provide financial resources for networks to be set-up, and for local authority networks to undertake governing processes through PL/PT. However, the funding usually supports short-term projects, and networks can be dependent on this funding to stay active. Thus, once the project is completed, the links between local authorities can fade - for example the Black Sea Environmental Programme in Plymouth (1992 to 1996), and the DEMOS project in Aberdeen (2002 to 2004) (Chapter Four). Type I CTCC can also have longer-term links between local authorities because they are involved in benchmarking clubs that have been set-up by central government (Chapter Five). In summary, the temporality of links may be dependent on external resources that can structure the network, or a meta-governor that holds the network together – through for example, compulsory membership of benchmarking clubs. In Types II and III CTCC, the links may be more dependent on the role of the actors involved. As Chapters Four and Six have shown: actors may have other priorities that they have to attend to; relationships between actors that are important nodes within networks can break-down because the 'rules of the game' change; and actors change local authorities or jobs. The break-down of relationships can impact upon both face-to-face and virtual networks/partnerships. This is because as nodes in networks, actors are the agents that transfer the knowledge,

and experiences between institutions to facilitate policy learning. However, by nature some networks are set-up as short-term links between local authorities. Thus, it is not an issue if the links fade if the CTCC has carried out its governance objective within that duration.

The fourth important variable that can have an influence upon the three types of CTCC is 'activeness'. Whilst Marcussen and Torfing's (2003) dimensions do not account for this, it concerns the passive and active nature of networks and partnerships. In Type I CTCC networks and partnerships are likely to be more active. This is because of the nature of co-operation that is taking place. Through Best Value, local authorities are involved in benchmarking clubs and draw on each others knowledge to develop policy learning through benchmarking activities. Whilst there is less evidence for the activeness in European funding programmes, where this takes place links are likely to be active because local authorities are funded to be involved in project-working and deliver on policy outcomes. In Type II CTCC the activeness between local authorities can depend on the objective of the co-operation. For example, where a local authority is liaising with another informally to draw upon policy learning there can be a spurt of activity between these authorities. However, in some instances it can be that the network might be reduced to a virtual network which still allows from some interaction, but resources (actors and funding) are primarily directed elsewhere. Similarly in Type III CTCC, local authorities may have spurts of active co-operation because they come together to influence the policy-making and outcomes, of the European Commission and central government. However, where the local authorities are not looking to influence policy-making, the links between local authorities become passive.

The fifth important variable is 'power' (section 2.3). This is discussed under 'level' in the dimensions identified by Marcussen and Torfing (2003). The facilitation and objectives of local authority networks and partnerships within CTCC comes down to who has the resources and the power – for example whether this is supra-national institutions, the state, or local authorities. In Type I CTCC 'absolute power' (Allen, 2003) is predominant through 'power over' (Dowding, 1995). Local authority networks and partnerships are subject to 'power over' by the meta-governor. For example, Chapter Four has shown how CTCC can be driven by political influence and knowledge at the United Nations level. Chapter Five has shown how CTCC can be driven through

legislative power. Chapter Six has clarified that legislative power is significant because central government has the power to withhold financial resources from local authorities should they not co-operate with central government through undertaking policy learning from another authority to improve upon policy delivery. Thus, it is in the local authority's rational interest to participate in CTCC. In Type II CTCC, local authorities have more resources, and greater autonomy to govern networks and their objectives as they are not restricted through control by the meta-governor. Therefore, 'power to' is the predominant form of power. This is also a form of absolute power as local authority practitioners have the power to bring about outcomes through their ability as the dominant actor (see Allen, 2003; Dowding, 1996). In Type III CTCC, local authorities also have 'power to' but have greater resources and autonomy to lobby the European Commission and/or the state to influence policy-making and its outcomes.

The sixth important variable is 'plurality'. As with 'power' Marcussen and Torfing (2003) draw this variable into their 'level' dimension. Plurality concerns the 'governance mix' that takes place in the political landscape. The presence of hierarchy and meta-governance in the political landscape means that the plurality of governance needs to be taken into consideration in understanding how this constrains and enables governing through CTCC. In Type I CTCC there is a strong meta-governance and hierarchy presence (Chapter Six). In Type II CTCC hierarchy is not present, but there is a hands-off role for the meta-governor (e.g. European Commission or the state) in providing advice and guidance to the network as appropriate (Chapter Five). In Type III CTCC local authorities have the capacity to be beyond the structures of meta-governance to lobby supra-national institutions to influence policy-making and policy outcomes.

The seventh important variable that that can have an influence upon the three types of CTCC is 'virtuality'. Marcussen and Torfing (2003) do not refer to 'virtuality', which may reflect its general absence in the literature that discusses self-organizational networks. Virtuality concerns whether the processes of engagement that link local authorities are virtual and/or physical. In Type I CTCC, Chapters Five and Six have shown that where a local authority needs to get to grips with policy processes in developing a policy, for example, a climate change action plan, or process-based benchmarking is a mandatory requirement of the co-operation - then links are more

likely to be face-to-face. Local authorities have to undertake process-based benchmarking by engaging in face-to-face interaction, for example through field visits, to improve upon local service delivery through undertaking policy learning. In turn, this physical interaction highlights the importance of tacit knowledge in policy learning. However, the links can involve a combination of both virtual and physical interaction – face-to-face policy learning can be followed-up by enquiries through virtual forms of learning. In Type II CTCC, Chapters Five and Six have shown how interaction between local authorities is more likely to be of a virtual nature – through the use of the telephone, e-mail exchanges, and web-based. The role of explicit learning in this way has been discussed in Chapter Five. In Type III CTCC, the importance of practitioners attending face-to-face meetings to discuss policy problems is important, albeit this is supplemented by virtual interaction. Whilst Chapter Six has not specifically drawn attention to lobbying processes in governance, it has highlighted the importance of face-to-face interaction where negotiation between practitioners is an important part of governing processes to deliver policy on the ground.

The eighth important variable is 'sphere'. As with Marcussen and Torfing's (2003) 'sphere' dimension, this draws attention to the role of public-private networks. This thesis has argued that CTCC should be seen as a co-operation between local authority actors. However, in some instances, in the case of match-funding or private-public partnerships, by its nature CTCC will involve interaction with private actors as part of the network or partnership. In Type I CTCC there is more likely to be a role for private-public actor networks between cities. This is because this form of network is promoted through European funding programmes (Chapter Four). Given the voluntary nature of Types II and III CTCC, these provide more scope for networks that consist only of local authority actors.

In summary, the links, exchanges and networks that are established through CTCC are complex and they can be dynamic. Through an exploration of the factors that influence CTCC, links can to varying extents be: formal/informal; voluntary/mandatory; long/short-term; active/passive; self-organizing/controlled; horizontal/vertical; virtual/physical; and public/private-public. The three CTCC type framework has been drawn upon to explain how these factors shape the nature of local authority networks and partnerships. More specifically, there are four key factors across all three types of

CTCC that stand-out that variously constrain or enable governing through PL/PT. These are: 'power' - the ability to mobilize resources, in particular financial ones; 'virtuality' - the need for a combination of physical and virtual interaction; 'formality' - the important role of trust and inter-personal relationships; and 'plurality' the need for a governing mix between hierarchy, external meta-governing of the networks, and the self-organizational networks themselves.

7.2.3 Research Question Three: The Implications of Policy Learning and Policy Transfer Through CTCC

This thesis has argued that PL/PT is the key governing process of CTCC, and this has led to four conclusions about its practice and implications. First, is the ways that policy learning generally takes place. The self-organizational networks – policy networks (Marsh, 1998a; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996) and governance networks (Jessop, 2003; Leitner et al., 2002; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005; 2007a) literature emphasises that the development of inter-personal relationships, informality, trust, and the use of face-to-face engagement are important in facilitating engagement within networks. In Type I CTCC this is the case. For example, as Chapter Five has illustrated, through benchmarking activities local authorities do undertake face-to-face engagement to draw upon policy learning. However, in Type II CTCC, local authorities are more likely to engage with each other through virtual interaction. This is because of time and financial resource constraints and the focus on statutory targets by local authorities. Thus, where resources are mobilized by them for policy learning on a voluntary basis, this is more likely to involve virtual forms of engagement (e.g. browsing of websites and on-line policy documents) than face-to-face engagement (e.g. meetings, workshops, conferences). In short, one cannot disregard the importance and significance of virtual interaction in policy learning that is generally ignored by policy networks and governance networks literature.

Chapter Five has shown how virtual interaction is seen by practitioners to be an effective and efficient means of policy learning and informing local policy-making. Nevertheless, the implications of virtual interaction for the quality of learning both transferred and implemented is that over time there may be threats to the fabric on which local authority networks and partnerships are constructed. In other words, as the

self-organizational networks literature and practitioners have pointed out in Chapter Six, trust and the development of inter-personal relationships are important to facilitating governing within networks. The development of inter-personal relationships and trust are seen in the governance literature as being the 'glue' that holds actors within networks together (Jessop, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003; Marsh, 1998a; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Rhodes, 1996; Sørensen and Torfing, 2005). Thus, where trust and the development of inter-personal relationships is absent, this can leave networks and partnerships vulnerable to failings. The 'glue' of virtual networks concerns other factors such as common shared interests and access to virtual technologies. However, the 'glue' of virtual governance networks may not be as strong as the development of inter-personal relationships and trust that is discussed in the policy networks and governance networks literature. This is precisely because the development of inter-personal relationships can be absent from virtual networks, leading to three implications for understanding CTCC and environmental governance: (1) governing can be fragmented because the networks and partnerships can be disbanded in the absence of inter-personal relationships as actors are not motivated to keep the links flourishing; (2) it may be difficult to verify the quality of the facts that are drawn upon through virtual policy learning. This suggests that actors may not be concerned as to the quality of the source or facts of information and (3) the quality of policy learning may be compromised because actors may not fully capture all the processes of policy learning through virtual engagement. In turn, as Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) note, the quality of learning that can allow for more effective policy-making and service delivery may be compromised if incomplete policy transfer takes place.

However, as Helling et al., (2005) have suggested (Section 5.1.2), the use of video conferencing may have the potential to improve communication between actors where face-to-face interaction is not possible; and it may be able to be used to facilitate learning by practitioners as it allows for simultaneous two-way flows of information. In summary, 'mandatory' benchmarking – Type I CTCC - is more reliant on formal and face-to-face policy learning than the voluntary approaches to governance networks found in Type II CTCC. This is rather ironic, given that it has been the literature on self-organizational governance that has stressed the importance of face-to-face interaction, but it is actually used less in self-organizational policy learning than in mandatory policy learning.

The second conclusion about the practices and implications of PL/PT through CTCC is that Type I CTCC, mandatory forms of PL/PT have generally been ignored in the self-organizational literature. This literature (CEC, 2001c; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a) (Section 2.1.3) suggests, that there is an important role for Type II CTCC - voluntary forms of PL/PT. However, through Type I CTCC, mandatory forms of PL/PT also have an important role in governing processes and shaping the political landscape, which has generally been overlooked. Mandatory benchmarking activities between local authorities suggest that policy learning is a response to addressing national objectives through Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and Best Value. Thus, the role of meta-governance and hierarchy cannot be ignored. For example, Chapter Six has shown how the nation state can directly intervene in local policy-making to 'row' a local authority through reform programmes where a local authority is seen to be failing by them in a policy area. Furthermore, it has shown how a focus on national priorities can be at the expense of local ones. In such cases, the state has the capacity and 'power over' not only to force a local authority to look at the good or best practice of another (meta-governance), but also to directly intervene and use hierarchical action and power to control the governing processes within the network. Thus, to prevent governance networks failure, for example, failings in the effective use of PL/PT between local authorities, hierarchical governance rather than meta-governance can be required. In short, meta-governance and its steering role over self-organizational networks can be necessary but not sufficient to achieve all governance objectives.

The third conclusion about the practices and implications of PL/PT through CTCC concerns the value of tacit knowledge in policy learning. In Type I CTCC this is highly valued. Chapter Six has shown how face-to-face engagement and tacit learning is critical to the networks success where a local authority is seen to be failing by Communities and Local Government (CLG). In such cases CLG forces that local authority to engage with more comprehensive and formal forms of PL/PT by drawing on tacit knowledge – through horizontal forms of co-ordination with other local authorities. Similarly, mandatory process-based benchmarking practices involve more formalized processes and comprehensive interaction and tacit learning through day field visits and meetings, than explicit forms of learning. Whilst tacit learning does not have to be formalized or face-to-face, these comprehensive approaches and the value in

policy learning are seen by central government and practitioners as important to improve service delivery and local governance, where a local authority is failing in a policy area. Thus, the drivers of more active and in-depth forms of policy learning and local authority co-operation are coming from central government. Furthermore, many of the barriers to voluntary forms of CTCC – Type II - that have been referred to in Chapter Five such as time and financial constraints are overcome to allow for co-operation to take place. This is because CTCC is prioritized as something that is important and necessary to improve upon performance.

The fourth conclusion about the practices and implications of PL/PT through CTCC concerns the role of best practice. The understanding in the governance literature that draws attention to policy learning (Bomberg and Peterson, 2000; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Rashman and Hartley, 2002; Stone, 2004) is that practitioners undertake this by drawing on best practice to facilitate more effective policy-making and delivery. In support of these arguments, it clear that through Type I CTCC local authorities do draw on best practice where mandatory process-based benchmarking takes place. The use of best practice as identified by the Audit Commission is important in bench-marking activities between local authorities and learning takes place through formal processes of engagement. This suggests that best practice is considered important by the Audit Commission as a means to both inform and allow for more effective policy-making. However, for Type II CTCC, the findings of this thesis have questioned the use of best practice as a key conduit of PL/PT.

In Type II CTCC local authorities generally take for granted that a policy or programme is an example of best practice and do not have the time or financial resources, nor consider it their role to question this. Thus, the empirical case study findings suggest that local authorities are more likely to draw on available knowledge 'out there' on the internet concerning the activities of other authorities. However, there is an exception to this rule. This is where local authorities consider the use of best practice to be important in certain situations which is illustrated through their voluntary approaches to benchmarking exercises between local authorities. For example, where it is unclear what a best practice model is, for example, because of a recent change in a national policy context, then local authorities have to improvise and do engage in discussions concerning the policy problem. Section 5.3.2 has drawn on the Aberdeen City Council

case study to show how the Scottish Housing Best Value Network was set-up so that local authority practitioners could discuss the uncertainty concerning the introduction of the Best Value regime. Nevertheless, despite all the emphasis on the importance of best practice, the policy learning literature (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Rashman and Hartley, 2002) and the thesis case study findings (Chapters Five and Six) – with the exception of Plymouth City Council and its day visit to the London Borough of Lambeth (Section 6.1.1) – has not established whether PL/PT does actually lead to more effective policy-making. They have shown however, that learning is valued in local governance as a means to inform local policy-making and policy delivery in both Types I and II CTCC.

7.2.4 Research Question Four: The effects of CTCC Practices on Existing Forms of Policy Delivery and Implementation

The findings do not suggest that CTCC has replaced other modes of governance, and is therefore not a new way in which local authorities in the UK undertake governance, for two reasons. First, whilst a trend in local governance has seen the emergence of self-organizational networks and the political opportunity for CTCC, another trend has been the emergence of the modernisation agenda. Central government's strong control over the modernisation agenda, for example, through its increase in statutory targets and allocation of funds, means that local authorities may not work through networks but on their own in delivering policy on the ground. In other words, the plurality of governance in the political landscape means that there is a strong role for meta-governance and the use of hierarchy that can constrain CTCC. Having said this, for some local authorities the modernisation agenda has encouraged local authority partnerships and networks through benchmarking activities in some policy areas; and local authorities do undertake voluntary forms of CTCC to inform their own policy making.

Second, knowledge exchange through networks does not mean that PL/PT takes place and therefore governing takes place. Chapter Five has shown how practitioners will contact other local authorities via e-mail or telephone and discuss policy problems, for example, how an authority has developed its documents. This does not mean, however,

that policy learning has taken place, albeit that knowledge might be transferred and used to inform policy-making. Therefore, whilst governing processes through CTCC can contribute to achieving environmental governance this is not always the case.

7.2.5 Overall Conclusions to the Research Questions

Through the three type CTCC framework the thesis findings suggest that CTCC is taking place in the transnational and UK domestic arenas (Section 7.2.1). In the transnational arena this is generally through Type II CTCC, voluntary forms of interaction, albeit Type I CTCC also takes place through European funding programmes, but this seems to be on the decrease. The implications for environmental governance are that there are other drivers of policy learning permeating the political landscape that facilitate CTCC – namely bottom-up informal ones. In the domestic arena there is a rise in Type I CTCC associated with mandatory benchmarking activities between local authorities. This draws attention to the plurality of governing in the political landscape and the importance of the nation state in facilitating CTCC. To add further insight to these arguments an exploration of the links, exchanges and networks established through CTCC has shown how eight key factors formality, basis, temporality, activeness, power, plurality, virtuality, and sphere of networks and partnerships, influence the three types of CTCC (Section 7.2.2). Of these, four factors stand out as being significantly important in variously constraining and enabling governing through all three types of CTCC: 'power' - the ability to mobilize resources, in particular financial ones; 'virtuality' - the need for a combination of physical and virtual interaction; 'formality' - the important role of trust and inter-personal relationships; and 'plurality' the need for a governing mix between hierarchy, external meta-governing of the networks, and the self-organizational networks themselves. These four factors have implications for policy learning and policy transfer through CTCC (Section 7.2.3). For example, where a local authority's resources are limited, and co-operation is not compulsory, then an authority may undertake policy learning through virtual interaction. The quality of policy learning that can take place through virtual governance and the implications for policy learning has been discussed (Section 7.2.4). Whilst local authorities consider virtual interaction to be an effective means of learning, central government consider face-to-face engagement and identified 'best practice' as being key to facilitating this process. This reasserts the influence that the

state has on facilitating CTCC. In summary, there is a clear role of hierarchy through 'power over' in the political landscape which can undermine the ideal construct of what self-organizational governance networks are about, as the following two quotes usefully summarize:

> Many networks exhibit tendencies towards hierarchy, inequality, and exclusion, in contrast to the claims made in the network discourse (Leitner and Sheppard, 2002, p. 505).

> New Labour seems congenitally bent on manipulating outcomes to such an extent that its commitment to devolving power, so clear in principle, seems more equivocal in practice (Morgan, 2007, p. 1238).

Having answered the research questions, some policy relevant implications have emerged from the thesis findings. These are explored in the next section.

7.3 Policy Implications

The findings have highlighted four policy implications for policies that can be taken into consideration by practitioners in a number of ways. The first concerns the practicality of being involved in European funding programmes, given their bureaucracy and problems of mobilizing match-funding resources. Therefore, as a broader issue, policy-makers and analysts should consider the practicalities of local authority engagement in formal forms of CTCC where they do not have the resource capacity to support this involvement, and where the authority itself is not committed to undertaking the project. Second concerns the quality of policy learning that takes place. The thesis has explored the implications of virtual interaction which it argues is becoming an increasing important means for PL/PT between local authorities and facilitates policy learning. However, the thesis has found that analysts and policy-makers need to ask the question as to the quality and effectiveness of policy learning that can be transferred through placing 'trust' in website-based material, and the downloading of documents, compared to face-to-face learning - for example, the facilitation of policy transfer through attending conferences, seminars, and workshops. Thus, the thesis findings have policy implications for practitioners as it allows them to

reflect on whether they think that they are obtaining sufficient policy learning through virtual interaction. For example, policy learning through virtual interaction may not allow for some of the behind the scenes processes to be recognized that have been used by a local authority in developing its policies. Furthermore, knowledge exchange does not always lead to policy learning. The key point is that virtual learning may mean that some sorts of knowledge are not transferred, and that has implications for policy development.

Third, where practitioners draw on the policy knowledge of another local authority, this does not necessarily mean that they are drawing on something that is of a recognized good or best practice. This thesis has suggested this is not necessarily a cause of concern for practitioners where they undertake policy learning on a voluntary basis. For example, they will browse local authority and public service websites to look for an example from another authority as to a practice that works. However, this does not mean this is an acceptable way to draw on knowledge and develop policy learning. The key way that best practice is identified is by the Audit Commission, through its CPA assessments, albeit these assessments are not necessarily used in voluntary PL/PT practices. The reasons as to why practitioners do not do refer more to CPA assessments or give more attention to the use of best practice in undertaking voluntary PL/PT is unclear. For example, it is not clear what the barriers to learning and making contact with another local authority in this way are.

Fourth, where practitioners undertake projects, either with the private sector or with other local authorities, it is crucial that the 'rules of the game' are defined at the outset to increase the rates of the projects success. Chapter Six has drawn on some examples and suggested that if the 'rules of the game' are not defined at the start of projects then governance networks can fail, and it can be problematic to fix. The Peterborough City Council case study for example, has shown that the project between Peterborough City Council and CRed a community carbon reduction organization failed because discussions concerning the availability of financial resources to take forward partnership working were not discussed at the very beginning. Having set out some key policy implications of the PhD research, the next section discusses areas for future research.

7.4 Areas for Future Research

In undertaking the research, four areas for future research have emerged. First, concerns the fact that who and what meta-governance is, is unclear, and further research is required on how it relates to the development of network forms of governing such as CTCC. The governance literature does not sufficiently explain how meta-governance works (Jessop, 2002; Kooiman, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007a), or what or whom the meta-governor is - for example, whether the meta-governor is the structure (Kooiman, 2003), an institution or actors within or outside of the network (Kelly, 2006), or practices and procedures of governing (Jessop, 2000; Whitehead, 2003b). The empirical case studies of this thesis have suggested that the meta-governor can be an institution (e.g. central government in pushing benchmarking activities through its Best Value regime) or an actor from outside of the network that can influence the networks objectives. However, given that different scholars have alternative views as to whether meta-governance is about specific meta-governors or is a process, there is scope to explore the presence of meta-governance through processes and as a structure.

Second concerns whether the type of local authority - county, district, or unitary – influences the extent to which local authorities undertake CTCC practices. Whilst Martins and Pearce (1999) have undertaken research into this, there is potential for more up-to-date research to explore how the modernisation agenda may have impacted upon CTCC within this context. Moreover, how the role of political parties within the counties, districts, and cities impact upon the extent to which CTCC takes place is an area for future research.

Third, the research has not provided scope to explore how some of the larger local authorities engage in transnational co-operation, for example, the extent to which they are involved in face-to-face interaction overseas, and how processes of lobbying take place to influence European Commission policy making. This is because the thesis findings have not highlighted the role of Type III CTCC. Therefore, an area for future research is to explore the specific networks of the larger authorities, for example, to explore the governing processes involved in by member cities of the EuroCities network. The EuroCities network would be interesting to examine because as Schultze (2003) summarizes, this network '... is certainly the platform through which most of the cities that are active in EU affairs jointly act at EU-level' (Schultze, 2003, p. 129).

Attention has been given to its success in lobbying to influence policy outcomes at the European level in the European literature (Leitner et al., 2002; Schultze, 2003; Ward and Williams, 1997), albeit the processes of engagement in achieving this are neglected. EuroCities lobbied the EU Commission in funding for URBAN. URBAN is a community initiative devised by EuroCities that revitalizes the economy and social renewal of urban areas through providing EU support (Leitner and Sheppard, 1999).

Fourth, governance failure requires further exploration. The governance literature (Borzel, 1998; Jessop; 2000; Leitner and Sheppard, 2002; Loffler, 2003; Marcussen and Torfing, 2003) acknowledges governance failure. It does not suggest what happens when governance breaks down, and how to address the governance processes to resolve this. The empirical material within this thesis has not provided an answer to this at this stage of the research. It has, however, shown that if important lessons are learned such as establishing the 'rules of the game' at the outset, involving all players in the negotiation process, and recognition as to the importance of mobilizing resources for taking things forward, then this can create a firm foundation upon which co-operation can be facilitated, rather than constrained.

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Interviews Cited (undertaken in 2006)

Plymouth case study

- Senior Environmental Policy Officer, Plymouth City Council
- Plymouth LSP Manager
- Plymouth LSP Education Co-ordinator
- Plymouth LSP Health Co-ordinator
- Plymouth LSP Police Co-ordinator
- Leader of Plymouth City Council
- Corporate Performance Manager, Plymouth City Council
- Senior Planner, Plymouth City Council
- Assistant Director, Plymouth Community Partnership
- South West Regional Government Policy Officer

Aberdeen City Council case study

- Senior Economic and Environmental Policy Officer, Aberdeen City Council
- Community Planning Manager, Aberdeen City Council
- Community Planning Officer, Aberdeenshire Council
- Sustainability Co-ordinator, Aberdeen City Council
- Community Planning Officer, Aberdeen City Council
- Senior Housing Strategy Officer, Aberdeen City Council
- Economic Regeneration Officer, Aberdeen City Council
- Senior Sustainable Development Officer, Hampshire
- Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organizations, Chief Executive
- Communities Scotland, Area Director

Peterborough City Council case study

- Peterborough City Council Strategic Planner
- Environmental Services Director, Peterborough City Council
- Transport Planning Officer, Peterborough City Council
- Environmental Health Department, Peterborough City Council
- Emergency Planning Manager, Peterborough City Council
- EEDA, senior actor
- PECT Consultant
- PECT Policy Officer
- Cambridge County Council Climate Change Officer
- Regional Assembly Consultant
- Environmental Agency Policy Officer
- DEFRA Policy Officer (climate change adaptation)
- LGA Sustainability Policy Officer
- UKCIP Policy Officer

Northumberland County Council case study

- Senior environmental Policy Officer, Northumberland County Council
- Northumberland Strategic Partnership Executive
- Northumberland County Council Senior Environmental Policy Officer
- EU Funding Department Officer, Northumberland County Council
- Emergency Planning Department, Northumberland County Council
- Renewable Energy Executive, Northumberland County Council
- Tynsdale District, Strategic Housing Officer
- GONE Policy Officer
- NEA Policy Officer
- North East Assembly Sustainable Development Policy Officer
- DEFRA Policy Officer (climate change adaptation)
- LGA Sustainability Policy Officer
- UKCIP Policy Officer

Appendix 1: Covering Letter and Questionnaire

13th September 2005

Dear

Survey on urban sustainability co-operation - your local authority experience

We are asking for your co-operation by participating in a survey that will provide important information about the extent to which UK local authorities are engaging with each other in the field of urban sustainability. We are interested in your knowledge and experience, which will contribute to Ph.D research on local authority co-operation and its relevance for urban sustainability. You have been selected as your local authority was a member of the former 'European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign' (ESCTC) network, and therefore it is expected that you can provide some informative feedback in relation to the survey questions. The survey is supported by the Building and Housing Social Foundation (BSHF) the collaborative partner in the research, and the Economic and Social Research Council. The research is being undertaken in the Geography Department at the University of Durham.

The survey results will be important, as there is currently a lack of evidence about:

- the extent to which local authority co-operation is taking place with regards to sustainable development objectives;
- the ways in which sustainable development is successfully promoted;
- the contribution of local authority co-operation to sustainable development;

For further information or clarification please contact James Bridges at the University of Durham (telephone 07905798770 or email j.i.bridges@durham.ac.uk). All information you provide will be treated confidentially and presented anonymously.

It would be helpful if you could return the completed questionnaire by Friday 30th September 2005. The completed questionnaire can be returned via email (if you requested this option) or posted to James Bridges, Research Postgraduate, University of Durham, Department of Geography, Room 301A, Science Site, South Road, Durham, DH1 3LE.

If you do not feel it is possible to answer some of the questions and you think there is someone within your local authority who would be more appropriate, please could you indicate this at each question as relevant.

The results of the survey will be interesting and useful for you as well as for us. Please let us know if you would like a summary of the results of the survey. We appreciate that as a busy person you may have many competing demands on your time and we are grateful for your assistance with this survey.

Yours sincerely

JAMES BRIDGES
Durham University
Department of Geography

DIANE DIACON
Director
Building and Social Housing
Foundation

(Note for email returns: (1) you may need to press the 'insert' button on your keyboard to allow you to type in your answers. (2) For questions that have optional answer boxes, please click on each box as appropriate and an 'X' will appear).

A. Background information on your area and organisation

1. Name of local authority:

   Name of person completing this survey and job title (optional question): (name)

   (job title)

2. What is your role or primary responsibility in your organisation?

B. Types of local authority co-operation

3. Is your local authority involved in any of the following networks/alliances/forms of overseas co-operation? (Please tick as many as applicable).

	Member of	Engaged in	Aware of
Aalborg + 10	☐	☐	☐
Cities Alliance	☐	☐	☐
Council of European Municipalities & Regions (CEMR)	☐	☐	☐
Energie-Cités	☐	☐	☐
EuroCities	☐	☐	☐
Healthy Cities	☐	☐	☐
ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability)	☐	☐	☐
The Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling (ACRR)	☐	☐	☐
World Health Organization (WHO)	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

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None ☐

4. Is your local authority involved in any of the following networks/alliances/forms of co-operation within the UK? (Please tick as many as appropriate).

	Member of	Engaged in	Aware of
Beacon Awards Scheme	☐	☐	☐
Laria (Local Authorities Research + Intelligence Association)	☐	☐	☐
Local Government Association (LGA)	☐	☐	☐
Local Authority Network	☐	☐	☐
Local Government Information Unit	☐	☐	☐
Local Government International Bureau (LGIB)	☐	☐	☐
New Local Government Network (NLGN)	☐	☐	☐
SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers)	☐	☐	☐
Sustainable Development Research Network (SDRN)	☐	☐	☐
UK Sustainable Cities and Aviation Network	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

None ☐

5. **Can you provide any examples of where your organisation has co-operated with a local authority for any of the following purposes with regards to sustainable development? (Please tick as many as appropriate). Please briefly explain your answers.**

☐ To seek to affect policy outcomes by influencing international institutions such as the European Commission.

(Example).....

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☐ To seek funding from international institutions such as the European Commission.
(Example).....

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☐ To work on a designated project through funding provided by an international institution such as the European Commission for sustainable development purposes.
(Example).....

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☐ To work across national borders for purpose of enhancing a region's competitive economic strength, or for environmental/social reasons.
(Example).....

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☐ To facilitate local authority to local authority partnership such as twin cities that may be for ceremonial reasons; or strategic friendships that share best practice regarding expertise, experience, or policies.
(Example).....

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☐ To work with other UK local authorities for any of the purposes of local authority co-operation as listed above.
(Example).....

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☐ Other (please specify).

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☐ No forms of co-operation undertaken.

6. What do you consider to be the most pressing problem with regards to sustainability that needs to be resolved by your local authority?
(Please specify)

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7. In your opinion can co-operation between local authorities help to overcome the problems detailed in question 6 above? (Please tick yes or no as appropriate).

Yes ☐ No ☐

(Please briefly explain why you have suggested yes or no)

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8. Do you consider that local authority co-operation makes a significant contribution to the sustainable development processes of your local authority in general? (Please tick one number).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

9. Do you consider that local authority co-operation makes a significant contribution to the sustainable development targets of your local authority in general? (Please tick one number).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

10. What do you identify as enabling the success of networks and partnerships with other local authorities to be down to? (Please tick one number in accordance with each sub-heading).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Formal interactions and meetings	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Informal interactions and meetings	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
The organization and management of the network/ partnership	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Allocation of tasks to specific network member	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Number of participant members	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Seniority of individual members within their organization	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

Resources available to individual members to make things happen	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Motivation of one or two individuals within the local authority	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Level of local authority awareness about the co-operation	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Involvement in network/co-operation by elected members	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Support through administration process	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Other (please specify)	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
None ☐					

11. In your opinion what is the basis for co-operation by your local authority? (Please tick one number in accordance with each sub-heading).

	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Unsure**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
A voluntary basis by local authorities in recognition of its benefits	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
A voluntary basis, but responding to recommend advice on possible benefits obtained from co-operation by	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

national /international government institutions					
To establish eligibility for grants/funding from national/international government institutions	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
As a result of imposed legislation from national/international government institutions	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Other (please specify)	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
None ☐					

12. Which are the types of obstacles that you are likely to encounter when undertaking co-operation with other local authorities? (Please tick one number in accordance with each sub-heading).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Insufficient budget is allocated for co-operation activities	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Insufficient time to be involved in co-operation	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Lack of interest from other local authorities to co-operate	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Lack of political support from within my own organisation	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Increasing economic competition/rivalry between local authorities hindering co-operation	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

Time invested in co-operation is disproportionate to potential of benefits received	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Other (please specify)	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
None ☐					

13. What benefits did you expect would accrue from engaging in local authority co-operation? (Please tick one number in accordance with each sub-heading).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
More effective application of local sustainable development initiatives through learning from the experience/expertise of other local authorities	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
The ability to influence international institutions with regards to policy outcomes and funding for sustainable development	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Greater cost efficiency through pooling of resources and economies of scale	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Raised profile and increased reputation of your local authority	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Additional income for your local authority through participation in the co-operation	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Assistance with					

achieving local/national/international targets	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Other (please specify)	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

None ☐

14. In general did the actual benefits of co-operation match up with the expected benefits? (Please tick yes or no as appropriate).

Yes ☐ No ☐

(Please briefly explain why you have suggested yes or no)

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C Best Practice: sharing your knowledge and learning from others experience

15. Does your local authority currently have a 'Local Agenda 21 strategy?' If yes please proceed to the next question. If no, please proceed to question 18. (Please tick yes or no as appropriate).

Yes ☐ No ☐

16. Do you consider that 'Local Agenda 21' significantly contributes to the sustainable development processes of your local authority **in general? (Please tick yes or no as appropriate).**

Yes ☐ No ☐

(Please briefly explain why you have suggested yes or no)

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17. **Do you consider that 'Local Agenda 21' significantly contributes to the sustainable development targets of your local authority in general?**
(Please tick yes or no as appropriate).

Yes ☐ No ☐

(Please briefly explain why you have suggested yes or no)

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18. **What are the policy areas in which your local authority shares best practice or learns from other experiences? (Please tick 'learn' and/or 'share' as appropriate).**

	Learn from	Share with
Reducing greenhouse gas emissions of climate change	Learn☐	Share☐
Addressing the impacts of green house emissions	Learn☐	Share☐
Economic development/local economy	Learn☐	Share☐
Community development policy	Learn☐	Share☐
Health and well being	Learn☐	Share☐
Public participation in sustainability decisions	Learn☐	Share☐
Sustainable housing	Learn☐	Share☐
Sustainable transportation	Learn☐	Share☐
Urban planning for sustainability	Learn☐	Share☐
Waste management	Learn☐	Share☐
Other (please specify)	Learn☐	Share☐
None ☐		

19. **In general, what are the aspects transferred through best practice in the policy areas that you refer to in question 18 above? (Please tick as many as appropriate).**

	UK	Europe	International
Goals and detailed objectives of a policy	☐	☐	☐
Content/ideas of a policy	☐	☐	☐
Practices/programmes of another local authority	☐	☐	☐
Lessons learned from practical application of policy (positive)	☐	☐	☐
Lessons learned from practical application of a policy (negative)	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

None ☐

D Dissemination

20. **Does your local authority disseminate sustainable development information/initiatives through any of the following methods to other local authorities in the UK or overseas? (Please tick as many as appropriate).**

	UK	Europe	International
Producing a newsletter stating best practice in relevant field	☐	☐	☐
Organising training workshops	☐	☐	☐
Organising conferences/seminars	☐	☐	☐
Producing consultation reports on sustainable development/ local strategic partnership documents	☐	☐	☐
Producing written information (guidelines/manual/online criteria)	☐	☐	☐
Establishing direct contact with people of another local authority	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

None ☐

21. **Does your local authority obtain sustainable development information and /or initiatives from other local authorities in the UK or overseas through any of the following methods? (Please tick as many as appropriate).**

	UK	Europe	International
Receiving a newsletter stating best practice in relevant field	☐	☐	☐
Attending training workshops	☐	☐	☐
Attending conferences/seminars	☐	☐	☐
Reading other local authorities consultation reports on sustainable development/ local strategic partnership documents	☐	☐	☐
Reading other local authorities written information (guidelines/manual/online criteria)	☐	☐	☐
Establishing direct contact with personal of another local	☐	☐	☐

authority

Other (please specify)

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None ☐

22. **Would you be prepared to be involved in the next stage of research that will involve a 1-hour in-depth interview that will be related to some of the survey questions? The findings from both the survey and interviews will prove to be useful and informative for yourself as well as us, and will provide insight into policy discussion concerning: the extent to which local authority co-operation is taking place with regards to sustainable development objectives in the UK; the ways in which sustainable development is successfully promoted; and the contribution of local authority co-operation to sustainable development. (Please tick yes or no as appropriate).**

Yes ☐ No ☐

23. **Are there any other questions you would suggest that could be put to your fellow participants in respect of this research, for the benefit of you all?**

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Thank you for taking the time to participate in the survey. If you would like to receive a copy of the results, please provide contact details of the person to receive it. For further information or

clarification please contact James Bridges at the University of Durham (telephone 07905798770 or email j.i.bridges@durham.ac.uk).

Name:

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Do you have any additional comments, suggestions concerning the survey, or any other issues you would like to highlight? Please write them below and continue onto another sheet if necessary.

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Appendix 2: Criteria Report to Identify Case Studies

There were 9 local authority respondents from the survey that suggested they would be prepared to be involved in further qualitative analysis; specifically as participants in case studies (Section 3.2.1). There was a two-phase criteria for selecting the case studies. How the case studies were selected that has been discussed in great detail in a separate report written alongside the thesis. Nevertheless, this is summarized below.

Criteria one – all types of CTCC are covered by the case studies

Points were awarded for the types of co-operation that each local authority was involved in. For example: twin cities, lobbying, policy learning, cross-border co-operation, project working (Table 1).

Table 1 Types of CTCC in relation to sustainable development

Local authority	Types of co-operation	Points awarded
1. Armagh city	3 types of co-operation: - Seek funding from national institutions -Work across national borders - To facilitate local authority partnerships in the UK	1 points
6. Derby city	Unknown	0 points
16.Peterborough city	2 types of co-operation: - Twin cities - To facilitate local authority partnerships in the UK	1 points
17. Plymouth city	4 types of co-operation: - Seek to affect policy outcomes through influencing national institutions - Seek funding from national institutions - Project work funded by international institution - To facilitate local authority partnerships in the UK	3 points
24.East Hampshire District	4 types of co-operation: - Seek funding from national institutions - Project work funded by international institution -Work across national borders - To facilitate local authority partnerships in the UK	3 points
64. London Borough of Merton	4 types of co-operation: - Seek to affect policy outcomes through influencing national institutions - Project work funded by international institution - Twin cities -To facilitate local authority partnerships in the UK	3 points
74. Northumberland County	4 types of co-operation: - Seek to affect policy outcomes through influencing national institutions - Seek funding from national institutions -Work across national borders - To facilitate local authority partnerships in the UK	3 points

83.Aberdeen unitary	5 types of co-operation: - Seek to affect policy outcomes through influencing national institutions - Seek funding from national institutions -Work across national borders - Twin cities - To facilitate local authority partnerships in the UK	3 points
97. Stirling unitary	4 types of co-operation: - Seek funding from national institutions - Project work funded by international institution - Twin cities - To facilitate local authority partnerships in the UK	3 points

0 or not listed types of co-operation = 0 points
1-3 types of co-operation = 1 points
4-6 types of co-operation = 3 points

Criteria two – Components of sustainable development

The survey has identified local authorities which are involved in learning and/or sharing of best practice in different components of sustainable development (see Table 2).

Table 2 Example of best practice within sustainable development component

Local Authority		
1. Armagh	*Share and learn, but not of same development component:* **(Learn):** reduce greenhouse emissions; address impacts of climate change; economic development; sustainable transport; **(Share):** community development; well being; participation; waste management	1 point
6. Derby:	**(Learn AND share):** climate change; economic development; community development; health and well being; waste management	3 points
16. Peterborough:	**(Learn AND share):** address impacts of greenhouse emissions; economic development; community development; sustainable transport; waste management	3 points
17. Plymouth	**(Learn AND share):** climate change; community development; public participation; urban planning; waste management	3 points
24.East Hampshire	**(Learn AND share):** reduce greenhouse emissions; community development; public participation; sustainable transport; urban planning; waste management	3points
64.London Borough of Merton	*Share and learn, but not of same development component:* **(Learn):** economic development; community development policy; health and well being; sustainable transport	1 point

	(Share): reduce greenhouse gas emissions; address impacts of greenhouse emissions; public participation; sustainable housing; urban planning; waste management	
74. Northumberland	*‚Share and learn but not of same development component:* **(Learn):** address impacts of climate change **(Share):** reduce greenhouse emissions; economic development.	1point
83. Aberdeen	**(Learn AND share):** climate change; economic development; community development; health; public participation; sustainable transport	3 points
97. Stirling	*Share and learn, but not of same development component:* **(Learn):** reduce greenhouse emissions; address impacts of climate change; public participation; sustainable housing; urban planning. **(Share):** economic development; community development; sustainable transport; waste management	1 point

Local authorities involved only learn, or only share of best practice = 1 point
Local authorities involved in both share and learn of best practice = 3 points

Criteria three – Number of networks/networking that local authorities are members of, or engaged in, overseas

This criteria has taken into consideration those local authorities who suggest they are either a member in name only, or actively engaged in networks/networking (Table 3). Hence rating is attributed to the number of networks/networking that local authorities are members of or engaged in.

Table 3 Number of networks /networking local authorities involved within overseas

Local authority	**Number of networks/networking member of/engaged in**	**Points awarded**
1. Armagh	1 EU network: - Aalborg +10 (member)	1 point
6. Derby	1 EU network: - ICLEI (engaged in)	1 point
16. Peterborough	1 EU network - Environment city (member)	1 point
17. Plymouth	2 EU network: - Alborg +10 (member) - Black Sea Environment (member)	1 point
24.East Hampshire	0 EU network	0 points
64. Merton	2 EU network: - EU LETIT 6th Framework (engaged in) - Asia-Urbs SD design (engaged in)	1 point
74. Northumberland	2 EU network: - ICLEI (Member) - Sustainable Energy Europe (member)	1 point
83. Aberdeen	4 EU network: - Aalborg + 10 (member) - East Scotland EU Consortium (member)	3 points

	- North Sea Commission (member) - KIMO (member)	
97. Stirling:	6 EU network: - Aalborg + 10 (engaged in) - Council of EU Municipalities + Regions (engaged in) - EuroCites (member) - Healthy Cities (member) - ICLEI (engaged in) - World Health Organization (engaged in)	3 points

1-3 networks = 1 points
4-6 networks = 3 points

Criteria 4 – Number of networks/networking that local authorities are members of, or engaged in, within the UK

Criteria four is based on the same principles as of three, except the focus is on co-operation between local authorities within the UK (Table 4).

Table 4 Number of networks/networking local authorities involved in within UK

Local authority	Number of networks/networking actively engaged in	Points awarded
1. Armagh	2 UK network : - Local Government Association (member) - SOLACE (member)	1 point
6. Derby	2 UK network: - Local Authority Network (member) - SOLACE (engaged in)	1 point
16. Peterborough	4 UK network: - Beacon Awards Scheme (engagement) - Local Government Association (member) - Local Authority Network (Engaged) - SOLACE (member)	3 points
17. Plymouth	5 UK network: - Local Government Association (member) - Local Government Information Unit (Engagement) - Local Government International Bureau (member) - SOLACE (member) - Sustainability Practitioners Network	3 points
24. East Hampshire	3 UK network: - Beacon Awards Scheme (Engaged in) - Local Government Association (engaged in) - SOLACE (engaged in)	1 point
64. Merton	6 UK network: - Beacon Awards Scheme (engaged in) - Local Government Association (member) - Local Authority Network (member) - Local Government Information Unit (member) - Local Government International Bureau (member) - London Energy Partnership (engaged in)	3 points
74. Northumberland:	3 UK network - Beacon Awards Scheme (engaged in) - Local Government Association (engaged in)	1 point

	- Local Government Association Unit (member)	
83. Aberdeen:	4 UK network - Local Authorities Research + Intelligence Association (member) - Local Government International Bureau (engaged) - SOLACE (Member) - Sustainable Scotland Network (member)	3 points
97. Stirling:	3 UK network - Local Government International Bureau (engaged) - SOLACE (Member) - Sustainable Scotland Network (member)	1 point

1-3 types of co-operation = 1 points
4-6 types of co-operation = 3 points

Criteria five – Dissemination of sustainable development information at UK, EU, and International levels

This criteria is based on the scale at which local authorities disseminate information/best practice through working together (Table 5). It takes into consideration dissemination of information by the respective local authorities at the scales of UK, EU, and International levels. Examples of dissemination include: producing a newsletter on best practice; organizing training workshops; organizing conferences; producing guidelines/manuals; establishing direct contact with people in another local authority.

Table 5 Types of dissemination

Local authority	**Types of dissemination**	**Points awarded**
1. Armagh	1 type	1 points
6. Derby	1 type	1 points
16. Peterborough	0 types	0 points
17. Plymouth	1 type	1 points
24. East Hampshire	2 types	3 points
64. Merton	2 types	3 points
74. Northumberland:	2 types	3 points
83. Aberdeen:	2 types	3 points
97. Stirling:	1 type	1 points

0 scale = 0 points
1 type of scale = 1 points
Two or 3 types of scale = 3 points

Criteria six – Obtain sustainable development information at UK, EU, and International levels

This criteria is based on the number of ways in which local authorities obtain sustainable development information through working with other local authorities at UK, EU, and International levels (classified as different scale types) (Table 6). sustainable development.

Table 6 Types of obtaining sustainable development information

Local authority	Types of obtaining information	Points awarded
1. Armagh	1 types	1 points
6. Derby	2 types	3 points
16. Peterborough	1 type	1 points
17. Plymouth	1 type	1 points
24. East Hampshire	2 types	3 points
64. Merton	2 types	3 points
74. Northumberland:	2 types	3 points
83. Aberdeen:	3 types	3 points
97. Stirling:	2 types	3 points

0 types = 0 points
1 type of scale = 1 points
Two or 3 types of scale = 3 points

League table of local authority standings

Table 7 provides a league standing table in descending order for the points accumulated for each local authority through the six point criteria above. Phase two which is detailed in section 3 below, analyses whether those local authorities that have higher points can be automatically considered for selection. According to rank standings these would be: Aberdeen; Merton; East Hampshire; (and two from) Plymouth, Northumberland, and Stirling.

Table 7 league table of local authority standings

Local authority	Points Awarded
Aberdeen	18 points
Merton	14 points
East Hampshire	13 points
Plymouth	12 points
Northumberland	12 points
Stirling	12 points
Derby	9 points
Peterborough	9 points
Armagh	6 points

Phase Two – Additional selection considerations

Phase two involves analysing if the local authorities that have a high score total can be taken forward as case studies (four need to be selected). There are five other criteria which need to be considered: (a) geographical location; (b) limited experience of local authorities; (c) type of local authority; (d) involvement of local authorities in specific networks/networking; (e) relevance of sustainable development component; (f) budget for the case studies. Each of these points are discussed below.

Geographical location

Consideration was given to three cases within England, and one in another area of the UK. This is on the understanding that there are more local authorities in the sample population in England (387) than in Wales (22), Scotland (32), and Northern Ireland (26). It is evident the local authorities that have the highest scores cannot be taken forward as case studies; Stirling which is joint 4th in the league table with Northumberland and Plymouth will have to be discarded because Aberdeen, the other local authority from Scotland, has the most accumulated points of all local authorities listed.

Selection of a case study with limited experience of CTCC

A case study will be selected that is engaged in low levels of co-operation. According to the league standings in Table 7 this would be Armagh. However, as stated in above, only one local authority from a region/country within the UK other than England will be selected. As Aberdeen has been selected, the next viable authority would be Peterborough or Derby. Derby however, has not provided any information concerning the types of co-operation that their local authority is involved in. Hence, the selected case studies at this juncture are Aberdeen, Peterborough, and Northumberland, and one from East Hampshire, Merton, or Plymouth.

Type of local authority

Aberdeen, Merton, Peterborough, and Plymouth are all unitary local authorities, whereas East Hampshire is a District Council, and Northumberland a County Council. The latter two authorities are part of a two-tier system of local governance. Cities or local governments at the municipal level are useful to look at because it is this specific tier level of local governance that we are interested in researching. However, East Hampshire as a District Council and Northumberland as a county are also useful to look into as this will provide some helpful information regarding whether this limits or enhances the types of co-operation that a council is involved in, and the extent to which they co-operate with county (as in the case of East Hampshire) or district (as in the case of Northumberland councils. Hence, the selected case studies at this juncture are Aberdeen, Peterborough, and Northumberland, and one from East Hampshire, Merton, or Plymouth.

Involvement in specific networks

The fourth additional criteria to consider is the tracing of specific networks. This will provide insight into the types, mechanisms and processes of CTCC. Although most of the networks can be considered to be involved in best practice, it also makes sense to follow the processes involved in a specific network that focuses on commitment to sustainable development and sharing knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. One such example is the ICLEI network, of which Northumberland County Council is a member. Furthermore, I propose to follow up the processes of a network that is structured through more informal means, such as Aalborg + 10, for example. Both Plymouth and Aberdeen are involved in this network. Hence, as in the section above, the selected case studies at this juncture are Aberdeen, Peterborough, and Northumberland, and one from East Hampshire, Merton, or Plymouth.

Clarification of policy areas of analysis

Feedback from the survey has implied that the development of Local Agenda 21 (LA 21) strategy plans involves the sharing and learning of best practice between local authorities to improve respective communities 'quality of life'. However, within the last few years, LA 21 in many instances has been superseded or integrated/absorbed into Community Strategies. In light of the significance of the Community Strategy as a means to implement sustainable development initiatives, community development is selected as a policy area of analysis. The two local authorities that can be considered most appropriate for studying this are Aberdeen and Plymouth. The reason for this is that both survey respondents provided useful information concerning community development, can relate to these issues through there respective employment roles, and are keen to be involved in further case study research.

The second policy area favoured for case study analysis is 'addressing the issues of climate change'. Analysis of CTCC involved in addressing issues of climate change is particularly useful because this is a very important subject that is currently under scrutiny in academia, government policy making and implementation, and the media. Moreover, it will be of particular interest to CASE partner the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF). Considering the geographical disparity, and membership in the specific networks, it is suggested that Peterborough and Northumberland are selected for the case studies ahead of London Borough of Merton, and East Hampshire. Moreover, respondents from both Peterborough City Council and Northumberland County Council have expressed an interest to be involved in the Ph.D research. From a practical perspective, Northumberland County Council (Morpeth) is in close proximity to Durham, making the research more convenient. Likewise, Peterborough is in close proximity to BSHF headquarters in Coalville (near Leicester). Hence when I am undertaking research at BSHF I can also make trips to Peterborough City Council. The potential case studies can therefore be identified as: Aberdeen City Council; Peterborough City Council; Northumberland County Council; and Plymouth City Council.

The budget for the case studies

The final and a significant issue to take into account is that of the budget. The costs calculated travel and accommodation suggest that Aberdeen, Peterborough, Northumberland, and Plymouth are financially viable for case study research.

Appendix 3: Sample of Semi-Structured Interview Questions (for local authority practitioners)

Climate Change case studies

Theme one: Role of Actors in climate change adaptation:

- Is climate change adaptation considered important?
- What is the role of local authorities in addressing climate change?
- What are the activities that you participate in that take account of the impacts of climate change?
- What is the motivation for your local authority being involved in addressing the impacts of climate change?
- Do you consider the impacts of climate change to be most important at the local, regional, or national level?
- By your own admission, why do you think that climate change is not being aptly addressed in your institution?

Theme Two: The role of CTCC in climate change adaptation:

- Who are the other actors that you engage with in addressing climate change?
- What are the types of co-operation involved in addressing climate change?
- What are the processes of interaction with other actors in addressing climate change?
- Can you tell me about the stages involved in producing this climate change action plan?
- Is co-operation with other actors useful to address climate change?
- How can you measure the success of co-operation with other actors to address climate change?
- Are there any formal or informal networks you are involved in or know about relevant to climate change adaptation (and the climate change action plan)?
- What works in partnership working?
- What do you understand by the term best practice?

- Is best practice important and a priority that is seen by your organization to be drawn upon?

- The guidance you have just talked about coming in the nature of PPS 1, how is this passed through to the local level?

Sustainable Community Strategy (Community Plan) case studies

Theme one: Role of Actors in producing the Sustainable Community Strategy:

- Is the Sustainable Community Strategy considered important?

- Who are the main actors within your authority responsible for developing the Sustainable Community Strategy?

- What is the motivation for your local authority producing the Sustainable Community Strategy?

Theme Two: The role of CTCC in producing the Sustainable Community Strategy:

- Who are the other actors that you have engaged with in producing your Sustainable Community Strategy?

- What are the types of co-operation involved in producing the Sustainable Community Strategy?

- What are the processes of interaction with other actors in producing the Sustainable Community Strategy?

- Can you tell me about the stages involved in producing your Sustainable Community Strategy?

- Is co-operation with other actors useful in producing your Sustainable Community Strategy?

- How does co-operation with other actors fit with your own institution and its priorities?

- What works in partnership working?

- How can you measure the success of co-operation with other actors in helping to produce your Sustainable Community Strategy?

- What do you get out of working with actors from other local authorities?

- Is there a role for guidance in developing Sustainable Community Strategies by central government?